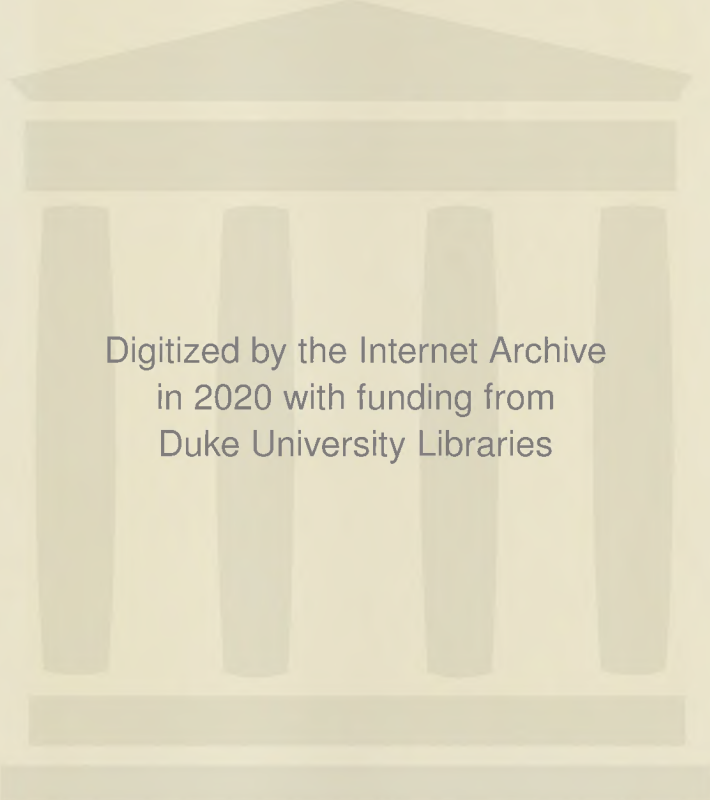




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# WAGES IN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY ENGLAND

BY

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## PREFACE

THIS study of eighteenth century wages began as a thesis for the doctor's degree at Radcliffe College, under the guidance of Professor Edwin F. Gay. Due to the generosity of Radcliffe in providing fellowships, the author was originally enabled to spend two years in England collecting the basic data. For several years after the completion of the degree, other work prevented the author from expanding the thesis into book form. In the summer of 1932, however, leave granted by the Harvard University Committee on Economic Research (now the Committee on Research in the Social Sciences) and Radcliffe College, permitted the author to procure additional material, largely for the west of England, which formed the weakest section, statistically, of the thesis.

In the interim, three articles, based on parts of the early work have been published. A summary of the data and the main conclusions appeared in the August 1930 number of the *Journal of Economic and Business History*. The portion of Chapter IV dealing with the Thornborough accounts was published in the *Economic History Review* for June 1932 and is reprinted here with their permission. And some of the theoretical ideas originally contained in the last chapter, now completely revised, were included in the paper published in *Facts and Factors of Economic History*, Harvard University Press, 1932, which was published in honor of Professor Gay.

The whole study has been revised and many parts of it re-written. The material on Oxfordshire, Devonshire, Somersetshire, and the cathedral records of Gloucestershire is entirely new. The statistical data have been rechecked. Attempt has been made to include works bearing on the study which have appeared since it was first written. The theoretical section has been expanded and changed in many ways.

Thanks are due to numerous individuals in English libraries, and to the officials of county and town for assisting the author

in procuring contemporary records. Especial mention should be made of Dr. Hubert Hall and Mr. Jenkinson of the Public Record Office, Mr. Thornley, Clerk of the Peace of the North Riding of Yorkshire, Mr. Dix, Clerk of the Peace of the County of London, and Mr. W. O. Gay, Clerk in charge of the Exeter Records. The Very Reverend Dr. Gee, Dean of Gloucester, was most kind in allowing me to use the Cathedral Records, and Mr. L. Tanner, Assistant Keeper of the Westminster Abbey Muniments, made it possible for me to work on the Abbey records. To Miss Cecily Hildyard of Scorton, Yorks, and G. F. Luttrell, Esq. of East Quantoxhead, Somerset, I am indebted for the permission to use freely the eighteenth century accounts of their private estates. Professor Tawney of the London School of Economics and Political Science has been very generous of his time, and of his influence in opening various sources of data. Mr. A. P. Wadsworth has been most helpful both with suggestions as to sources and in reading the original manuscript. I am also greatly indebted to Sir William Beveridge, and to Miss Nicholas, who was then his research assistant, for enabling me to use the price data collected as part of the international price study. Professor W. L. Crum of Harvard University and Professor A. L. Bowley of the London School of Economics and Political Science have made suggestions as to the use and interpretation of the statistical data. It was the suggestion of the late Professor A. A. Young that the median be used as averages for the wage series.

The author is greatly indebted to the Harvard University Committee on Research in the Social Sciences, not only for the leave mentioned previously, but also for enabling the author to revise the manuscript, and to use the Committee staff for the preparation of the charts and of part of the manuscript. Miss Mary Sulloway and Miss Catherine Tatnall are responsible for the excellent typing of the manuscript, and Miss Katherine Hampson prepared the numerous charts. My brother, Mr. A. J. Waterman, Jr., has been very helpful in doing much of the final research, and in the thankless task of checking footnotes. The collection of the western data was considerably accelerated by the assistance of my husband, who allowed his summer vaca-



tion to be interrupted by the monotonous task of copying wage figures from eighteenth century bills.

There are many more individuals who could be named, who have helped the author at various stages of the work. Professor Taussig went over the manuscript with great care and made many helpful suggestions as to the revision of the last section. Most of all, however, the author would like to express her indebtedness to Professor Gay who has been a constant stimulus throughout the entire process of completing the book and an inspiration when the inevitable drudgery of historical research obtruded itself.

Elizabeth Waterman Gilboy

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  
Committee on Research in the Social Sciences  
October 1933.



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## ENGLAND

SHADED AREA INDICATES SOURCE OF WAGE DATA



## INTRODUCTION

THE study of laboring conditions in eighteenth century England has been limited by the fact that continuous wage figures for that period were practically non-existent. Scattered data have been at hand, in works such as Thorold Rogers' *History of Agriculture and Prices*, but no wage figures for any extensive period. Continuous regional wages have also been difficult to find. The same limitations have existed in the matter of price data, so that any (continuous) measure of real wages throughout the century has been practically impossible. With such paucity of evidence, it is not surprising that as thorough and brilliant an economic historian as Mantoux devotes only forty pages out of four hundred and eighty-nine to a discussion of laboring conditions and the industrial revolution.<sup>1</sup>

In this field as in many others, a good deal of fresh material has been found in recent years. The records of mills and factories, of wage assessments, and other important historical documents, the existence of which had not been known, are constantly being unearthed from the most unlikely places. It was not surprising, therefore, to run across an unsuspected source of wage data among the miscellaneous papers which have been preserved in the quarter sessions bundles of each county. The bundles frequently contain a number of bills for work on county bridges and roads. These bills, which will be more completely described in the bibliography, give daily and sometimes weekly wages, and from them it has been possible to obtain fairly continuous wage series for each county. The limitations of time made it impossible for the writer to collect the figures for more than three districts in England. Similar records are available all over England, however, and more wage statistics would undoubtedly result from further researches along the same line.

<sup>1</sup> *The Industrial Revolution in the Eighteenth Century*, London, 1928, revised edition translated by Marjorie Vernon, Part III, chapter III. References to practically all the well known sources are given in this chapter.

Municipal and private accounts as well as the county records contain a great deal of data. The account books of cathedrals and towns often list the wages paid for repairs of the buildings under their care. The Westminster Abbey accounts, which have been used in the present study, are an excellent example of that type of material. In some private account books, for example, the account book of the Thornborough estate, there is a complete record of the wages paid to servants and laborers over a period of years. Frequently, however, such accounts merely record the personal or household expenditures of the family. Even such material is important in so far as it throws light upon the social and economic condition of the community, and especially as it affects the relation between the various classes. As the importance of this material for economic and historical research becomes clearer, more such manuscripts are being made available to students by their owners. Some of them have been printed.<sup>1</sup> I have not been able to examine as many of these documents as I should have liked. Most of the material for the present study has come from the county records.

With such sources as those described above, it is becoming possible to study working conditions in eighteenth century England with greater accuracy. The interest in laboring conditions of this period has been so great, however, that many historians have dealt with the subject, using what scattered material they could find. It has, indeed, been the current belief that adequate statistics of wages and prices could not be procured. Most of the conclusions concerning the condition of the lower classes in this period have been based on the evidence of contemporary pamphlets.

Many contemporary writers described the economic conditions of the laborers.<sup>2</sup> It was a matter of some importance to the

<sup>1</sup> For Example — *An Account Book of a Kentish Estate* — edited by Eleanor Lodge.

<sup>2</sup> It is curious that contemporaries seem to have thought of the laborers only as a composite class. "The lower orders", "the labouring poor", "the meaner sort", "the lower sort", are examples of the conveniently vague titles by which they were designated. (See contemporary works such as Guy Meigs's *The Present State of Great Britain*, Chamberlayne's *Angliae Notitia*, and Henry Fielding's *Enquiry into*



mercantilists, and most economic writers in the eighteenth century were mercantilists of one sort or another. They believed that cheap labor was the basis of a favorable balance of trade. They reasoned that success in foreign markets necessitated low-priced goods, which in turn made cheap labor essential. Thus they could undersell their competitors in the markets of the world, maintain an excess of exports over imports, and bring back the surplus in precious coin.<sup>1</sup> As a result of this trend of thought there were many pamphlets indicating how labor might be made cheap, with sample budgets and wage rates as illustrations.

It became, indeed, the fashion to estimate the minimum upon which a laborer and his family might live. This mental diversion kept its popularity even when a strictly mercantilist interest in cheap labor had given place to real anxiety about the lower classes and the problem of unemployment, and the steadily increasing poor rate. It was part of an increasing propensity to make estimates of everything from population and gin-drinking to the amount of luxurious imports. They were manifestations of a genuine desire for quantitative evidence and marked the beginning of statistics as a study.<sup>2</sup>

Several seventeenth century estimates of this sort were widely used as the basis of discussion in the eighteenth century. One of the most famous is that of Sir Matthew Hale who figured that a family of six, with the parents and two children working, "are not able to maintain themselves and their Family in Meat, Drink, Cloathing, and House rent under ten Shillings *per* Week, and so much they might probably get if employed; This amounts to 26£ *per Annum* . . ."<sup>3</sup> Gregory King in 1688 gave the yearly

*the Late Increase in Robbers*.) As Miss Marshall has remarked — "The poor from being fellow countrymen had become a distinctive species." (*English Poor in the Eighteenth Century*, London, 1926, p. 46.) Miss Marshall apparently does not see the relation of this attitude to mercantilism.

<sup>1</sup> See E. S. Furniss, *The Position of the Labourer in a System of Nationalism*, for an able analysis of the mercantilist theory of labor. Jacob Viner in "English Trade Theories before Adam Smith", *Journal of Political Economy*, 1930, surveys mercantilism, but almost entirely from the monetary and trade angle.

<sup>2</sup> See Wesley Mitchell's short summary in *The Problem and Its Setting*.

<sup>3</sup> *A Discourse Touching Provision for the Poor*, London, 1683, p. 6.

income of the families of artisans at £40; of "Labouring people and out servants" as £15; and of cottagers and paupers as £6-10-0.<sup>1</sup> Ten years later R. D. (Richard Dunning) contributed an account of "The Common Outgoing Of a Day-Labourer in Husbandry"<sup>2</sup> who was assumed to have a wife and three children, with the wife supporting herself and one child, "which is the most a Woman can and what few will do . . .".<sup>3</sup> Out of the 2s.6d. or 2s.8d. which R. D. supposed to be the full weekly wages of the man, he was to maintain himself and the other two children in clothes, food, drink, etc., and pay the rent, buy tools, fuel, etc., which is estimated as coming to 2s.5d. per week. But this budget, as the author was aware, allowed for no emergencies, such as illness or loss of work and even these could barely be met by the wages. If the woman's labor were omitted, there would have been a deficit.

Such seventeenth century computations, of which the above are prominent examples, served as a model for the following century and were often quoted in full. But the eighteenth century did not lack its own "Political Arithmetic". Defoe wrote in 1704 that "a poor Man" shall earn 7s. to 10s. a week in Kent and 4s. in the north.<sup>4</sup> Writing in 1757, Josiah Tucker remarked that "it may be affirmed in general that the Wages of Men . . . is for the most Part, from 1s. to 2s.6d. per Day: and the Wages of Women from 4d. to 1s. throughout the Kingdom."<sup>5</sup> Joseph Massie produced an elaborate computation in 1758, which was printed in such mixture of types and capitals as to confuse the reader completely. He estimated that the annual income of a man, his wife and two children, with all at work, approached £30. He then presented a neat and detailed budget of household expenses which came to the convenient total of £29-10-0 per annum.<sup>6</sup> The correspondence is almost too good to be true. Two years before that Massie had calculated the annual incomes

<sup>1</sup> In *Chalmer's Estimate*, 1696, pp. 424 and 425.

<sup>2</sup> *Bread for the Poor*, London, 1698, p. 283.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. Cit.*, p. 286. This is probably applicable only to Devonshire.

<sup>4</sup> *Giving Alms No Charity*, London, 1704, p. 11.

<sup>5</sup> *Instructions for Travellers*, London, 1757, p. 19.

<sup>6</sup> *Considerations Relating to the Poor*, London, 1758, pp. 104 and 105.

of various types of laborers, such as common laborers, "manufacturers" of wood, wool, silk, etc., both in London and the country.<sup>1</sup> A London laborer was assumed to receive 9s. per week, or £23-8-0 per annum; a laborer in husbandry in the rural districts, 5s. per week, or £13-0-0 each year.

It is impossible to tell from the pamphlets how far these calculations were based on fact; and, if they were at all accurate, how far they were meant to apply to laboring conditions all over England. It is probable that the figures had some basis in personal and limited experience. At any rate, they must always be used with caution owing to the propagandist tendencies of their originators. Practically every eighteenth century pamphleteer was trying to prove something; either that parish relief was bad or that it was good; that more workhouses were needed or less; and so on. The construction of more or less hypothetical budgets and earnings was usually a step in building up their case.

Later on in the century a very different type of study of laboring conditions began to appear. Incited, perhaps, by the suspicion that the estimates of clever politicians as to what the typical laborer earned and lived on, were at variance with actuality, certain patient individuals set out to discover the facts. Foremost among them was Arthur Young. His first venture into the field savored of the old variety. In 1768 Young presented an estimate of a representative laboring family (husband, wife, and three children) who between them earned £37-15-0 a year, and spent £21-17-0.<sup>2</sup> He was somewhat apprehensive, however, as to whether his estimate would be thought true, and attempted to allay criticism in advance by seeking out four families in the circumstances he was discussing. In his own words: "I am so strongly sensible of the prejudice, I have here to combat with, that I shall now lay before the reader a state of the expenses of a labourer, as they now live, drawn up from the actual outgoings of four, who gave me the particulars . . .".<sup>3</sup> The average expenses

<sup>1</sup> *Calculations of Taxes*, London, 1756. Mrs. George gives these more in detail in her *English Social Life in the Eighteenth Century*.

<sup>2</sup> *The Farmer's Letters*, Second edition, London, 1768, pp. 192-196.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 198.

of these four families comes to £34-5-0, about £12-0-0 more than Young's calculations. If anyone as careful as Arthur Young could be so blinded by his own opinion of what *ought* to be expended, what can one expect from his less accurate contemporaries? And neither of these expenditure totals allows for the use of tea or sugar, luxuries which Young deplored, although he admitted that they had become an indispensable part of the laborer's diet.<sup>1</sup>

It was soon after the publication of these letters that Young commenced his famous tours, the northern in 1768, the eastern in 1770. In the 1780's and 90's, while he was editing the *Annals of Agriculture*, there were still more tours — to Sussex, Norfolk, etc. These travels furnish a great deal of information as to laboring conditions for Young noted the price of labor and provisions in nearly every town and region he visited. Social investigators from Caird and Bowley to Mantoux have used these figures as the chief source of eighteenth century wage estimates.

An investigator who was as industrious as Young, but for some reason less well known to posterity, is William Marshall. He wrote exhaustive treatises on agriculture in Yorkshire, Gloucestershire and various southern and midland counties.<sup>2</sup> In my opinion, his account of agricultural methods in the different regions is distinctly more intelligible to the layman than those of Arthur Young, and certainly more interesting. He was more concerned with general social conditions and his comments on the life of the laborers are intelligent. The Reverend J. Howlett is also well known as one of the late century social investigators. He wrote a pamphlet on the reasons for the increase of the poor.<sup>3</sup> He quoted wages in the southern and eastern counties in both 1737 and 1787 and the average price of wheat at that time.<sup>4</sup> All these writers, in fact, give actual wages and prices.

The number of contemporary studies of wages and budgets increased as the century drew to a close. Eden<sup>5</sup> and Davies<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 199.

<sup>2</sup> These works are listed in detail as they are referred to.

<sup>3</sup> *The Insufficiency of the Causes to which the Increase of our Poor*, London, 1788.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 67.

<sup>5</sup> *The State of the Poor*, three volumes, London, 1797.

<sup>6</sup> *The Case of the Labourers in Husbandry*, Bath, 1795.



published a series of actual budgets of agricultural laborers in all parts of England, which have been heretofore, with the contributions of Arthur Young and Marshall, the chief sources for students of eighteenth century laboring conditions. The *Annals of Agriculture* abounds in minor articles on the same subject, especially from 1790 on, and the whole of Thomas Ruggles' book on the poor was first published in that magazine. Finally the government itself was forced by the distress which came as the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars, and the succession of bad harvests, to examine the agricultural conditions in each county, and to look into the amount and method of paying wages. The result was the series of agricultural surveys in the nineties, and a parliamentary report in 1824.<sup>1</sup>

The difficulty in using the figures collected by these diverse individuals lies in their discontinuous nature (they are usually for only one year), the fact that those which approach accuracy come exclusively from the end of the century, and the suspicion that even cautious people like Eden and Davies may have been unconsciously biased. That they have been almost the only known sources for studies of the laborer's condition at this date may account for the dark and dreary pictures of his life which have been painted for the second part of the century. They were all attempts to explain the miseries of the poorer classes in the latter eighteenth century.<sup>2</sup> The authors themselves seem to ignore or minimize any indications that many of the poor were better off than they had ever been before, even at the end of the century.

Among more recent historians, Thorold Rogers has been the chief source of wage and price figures. His *History of Agriculture and Prices*, the first six volumes of which he edited himself, (the last two were compiled by his son) is a vast collection of wage and price figures, brought together from manuscript sources and

<sup>1</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on Labourers' Wages*, 1824.

<sup>2</sup> Practically all the budgets of Eden and Davies show a deficit. This may not be the general situation. They may have selected the less well-off families or neglected various favorable factors, such as supplementary income. Eden admits that his budgets often underestimate family earnings. (See *State of the Poor*, vol. I, pp. xxvi and xxvii.)

extending from the twelfth century to the nineteenth. The eighteenth century figures are the least satisfactory, as they are even more scattered than those for previous centuries.<sup>1</sup> Rogers also made averages of wages and prices from his data but these do not cover the eighteenth century. In another work Rogers set down his conclusions as to the course of wages throughout the centuries.<sup>2</sup> He was one of the first popularizers of the idea that the first half of the eighteenth century was "the golden age" of agricultural labor, and that the last half was a period of the extreme degradation of the working classes. His opinion as to laboring conditions throughout the centuries was pessimistic and he believed that the wage assessment clauses of the Act of 1563 were the result of "a conspiracy, concocted by the law and carried out by the parties interested in its success . . . to cheat the English workmen of his wages, to tie him to the soil, to deprive him of hope, and to degrade him into irremediable poverty."<sup>3</sup>

The work of Steffen is based on Rogers' averages.<sup>4</sup> Steffen derived a chart of daily wages in terms of wheat and wheat-meat from the fourteenth to the nineteenth century. He made no attempt to separate the localities included in the average, nor to weight their importance. His conclusions were similar to those of Rogers, with perhaps less extreme pessimism.

Furniss has used Steffen's charts in his discussion of the social and economic condition of the laborer in the eighteenth century.<sup>5</sup> He concluded that conditions were relatively good, especially for the craftsmen, up to about 1755, with a decline thereafter. He also treated the social and moral conditions of the laborers,<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I have used very few of these figures, only the wages at Guiting, Gloucestershire and the Gloucestershire and Yorkshire wheat prices. Most of the wage data do not refer to the regions taken up in this study. Rogers' Westminster figures, which extend to 1713, are similar to those used below and seem to have been obtained from a copy of the account book for the repairs of the Abbey. Rogers mentions using a book at the Bodleian, which contained accounts of the repairs of all the London churches after the Great Fire. (See volume II, p. 365.)

<sup>2</sup> *Six Centuries of Work and Wages*, London, 1884, two volumes.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, see discussion, pp. 406-409 in volume II.

<sup>4</sup> *Studien zur Geschichte der Englischen Lohnarbeiter*, Stuttgart, 1901.

<sup>5</sup> *Position of Laborer*, Appendix I. Furniss is more aware of the limitations of his data than either Rogers or Steffen.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendices II and III.

and appears to have taken some of the eighteenth century pamphleteers a bit too seriously. This point will receive more attention in the conclusion, but for the present, we may say the "sloth" and "indolence" were not necessarily the corollaries of "luxury" and "debauchery." The pamphlet material which Furniss has so ably used was for the most part written by Londoners and may therefore be supposed to apply with more accuracy to the metropolis than to any other part of the country. London conditions cannot be taken as typical of the rest of the country.

The best statistical treatment of the subject of wages has been made by Professor Bowley.<sup>1</sup> In his study of nineteenth century wages he has also included figures for the late eighteenth century in agriculture<sup>2</sup> and scattered eighteenth century wage rates for the building trades.<sup>3</sup> By a rather complicated statistical process which involved a good deal of estimation and interpolation, Professor Bowley made index numbers of agricultural wages for each county. Then he divided the counties into districts and took index numbers of each district and from these indexes finally derived an index for the whole of England. He used a simple arithmetic average with 1892 as a base. The general index number of agricultural wages was 53 in 1767-70, and 66 in 1795. In a somewhat similar fashion, index numbers for England were derived for the various trades. In the index for the building trades Professor Bowley made special allowance for the influence of London, and weighted by population the districts included.

Although the fact that these indexes go back no further than the date of Arthur Young's tours makes them of small use for this study, Professor Bowley's method is of great importance.

<sup>1</sup> A. L. Bowley, *The Statistics of Wages in the United Kingdom during the Last Hundred Years* (Journal of Royal Statistical Society, 1898-1901) and his book based on these articles, *Wages in the United Kingdom in the Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge, 1900.

<sup>2</sup> These figures are those given by Caird in his *English Agriculture, 1850-1*, and are based on Arthur Young's averages.

<sup>3</sup> In his book on nineteenth century wages Professor Bowley gives some building trade wages for repairs at Greenwich Hospital during the eighteenth century. He obtained these from a Greenwich Hospital account book in the British Museum. The rates are not so detailed as the Greenwich Hospital figures below, but are similar in amount.

In making his index numbers he used weekly wages, deriving them from the daily rates wherever that was necessary. The validity of this, and of his method in general, will be discussed further in the statistical appendix. Professor Bowley has made the first application of statistical method to the study of wage-history. He discussed the difficulties involved in making any estimate of wages over a period of time, owing to payment in kind, privileges and perquisites, and a lack of data on the number of days worked. He made allowance for regional divergence and attempted to weight his regional averages. Professor Bowley would be the first to admit that the amount of approximation which his statistical method involved makes the value of the final indices to the economist problematical. Considered as a study in method his work is invaluable.

Professor Bowley was, as we have seen, completely aware of the difficulties involved in any investigation of wages and prices, particularly in the case of the eighteenth century, where the initial figures are so dubious. These difficulties have been stated in graphic language by Mantoux:<sup>1</sup>

“If we want to discover, not the nominal wage, i.e. the money paid for a certain time or for a certain piece of work, but the actual wage, together with its purchasing power, we are tackling a difficult and complicated problem, the solution of which can only be obtained by comparing a number of different data. We ought first to know a man’s total wage for a month, a season or a year, and how far it was reduced by either voluntary or compulsory unemployment. For a man may be well paid and yet earn very little if he does not work every day. Then we should know whether he had any other source of income, as was the case with village workers, who, when comparatively well off, cultivated their plots of land or grazed their cows on the common, and who, when very poor received help from the parish. We should also want to know what each member of the family contributed to the annual family budget. Then, even assuming that we have been able to solve that part of the problem, a no less difficult problem remains to be solved, for we should want to find out how this income was actually spent. And it would not be enough to know what were the price of foodstuffs and the rents. For unless we knew what kinds of food were actually consumed, and the relative quantities of each which the needs and habits of the consumers demanded, such a list of prices would not be of much use. In order, therefore, to be able to draw any conclusions, we should need to have at our disposal a great collection of facts which nearly always are missing, except for our own times.”

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 430-431.



This is certainly a formidable set of criteria. It is impossible of achievement at the present day, to say nothing of the eighteenth century. Budget investigators even now find it extremely difficult to determine accurately the extent of voluntary unemployment, supplementary sources of income, or the quantity of food consumed. Scientific perfection, when dealing with this sort of subject, cannot be obtained. Mantoux is therefore quite logical in stating that

“It would be rash to attempt to draw a general price curve on the basis of such approximate figures (Young’s, Eden’s, etc.) as it could only be done at the expense of scientific honesty; and *a fortiori* an attempt to make any mathematical comparison between the movements of prices and wages could only result in mystification.”<sup>1</sup>

In so far as this criticism applies to any application of statistical method to wage and price figures in the eighteenth or any other past century, it merits some attention. There are some economic historians who agree with Mantoux in thinking that the statistical data of past centuries are too imperfect to be of any use, and are in fact, misleading. They believe that safety and accuracy lie in the way of largely disregarding the figures that are available, and relying rather on descriptive historical evidence. But as eminent a statistician as Professor Bowley was not above applying statistical method to what data he could find for the eighteenth century. Although such a complex statistical method as he used is probably not generally applicable to the admittedly imperfect data of past centuries, some attempt at statistical measurement is, I believe, desirable. I do not agree with those who scorn the application of statistics to the problems of economic history. Even if the data are imperfect, they are, to my mind, if handled with caution, a better basis for discussion than purely descriptive material.

The eighteenth century wage figures which I have found, and the prices which Sir William Beveridge has so generously allowed me to use, will be presented in as simple and unobscure form as possible, and will be interpreted in the light of all other evidence I have been able to collect. It is true that these wage data are

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 439.

statistically very bad. They are subject to errors of locality, of quality, and of sampling. Some of them were influenced by contracts over a period of time. The prices are only of grain; in some cases discontinuous. The way in which these difficulties have been met in the present study will be discussed as they come up, and in more general fashion in the statistical appendix. Here I shall only state that the method used has in every case been as simple as possible. Medians have been taken for the county or regional averages wherever three or more cases occurred in a year. The number of samples on which the median was based fluctuated enormously by years and by regions. Sometimes there was only one sample; and again there would be about thirty or more each year.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the inaccuracies of these figures they remain the most important facts available for the study of the laborer's standard of living during this period. With them it is possible to tell the approximate trend of money wages from 1700-1790, and to judge the differences in the level of wages among the regions studied. When they are compared with the prices of grain, the probable trend of real wages is apparent.<sup>2</sup> They afford the best foundation for the evaluation and discussion of general descriptive and social evidence gleaned from pamphlet material, and are in turn interpreted by this other testimony. They are at least concrete; and are as such preferable to vague generalities or descriptions.

The present study deals with three regions in England: London and its immediately surrounding area; the West, including Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Somersetshire, and Devonshire; and the North, namely, Lancashire and Yorkshire. Comparisons are therefore possible between a growing commercial centre such as London; a thriving industrial region such as the north; and a decaying industrial centre, such as the west. They are each

<sup>1</sup> The extent of this fluctuation is indicated in the median tables in the appendix.

<sup>2</sup> The use of the chief grain eaten by the laborers of each region as a measure of purchasing power is much less inaccurate for the eighteenth century than it would be today. Then, with a lower standard of living, and a less diverse budget, bread took up the major proportion of the family income. Professor Bowley translated some of his indices into the amount of wheat purchasable, and when I discussed the point with him, he brought out the above argument.

analyzed in detail. The concluding chapter takes up various eighteenth century wage theories, and some later theoretical development. In the appendices may be found technical matter relating to sources and statistical method.



PART I  
LONDON



METROPOLITAN LONDON

## PART I

### LONDON

THE economic and social position of the London laborer can scarcely be comprehended without knowledge of the characteristics of the city. Living in a rapidly growing metropolis, the working classes were subjected to a variety of influences of which the country laborer was almost completely unaware. Research is not needed to prove that the conditions under which rural and urban laborers work and live are and were entirely different. The difference is almost axiomatic in any civilization. The divergence will be emphasized in this study, however, as an important part of the attempt to isolate and determine the force of regional and purely local differences in wages and living conditions. Then it may be possible to draw conclusions as to the course of the standard of living of English labor as a whole without recourse to the vague generalities with which contemporary and even later writers on eighteenth century laboring conditions abound.

Although in many ways the core of English eighteenth century economic life, London can in no sense be considered typical of the country. Many of its characteristics and problems were peculiarly and distinctly its own. Its development was largely as a commercial centre, in contrast to the purely industrial development of much of the country, especially the north. London was a magnet for the country ne'er-do-wells, for beggars and for all who could not succeed in the narrow spheres of provincial life. Equally it had a strong attraction for those who had succeeded more than well. As the centre of fashionable life it was the market for all kinds of conspicuous consumption which, in turn, set the styles for the rest of the country.

The best description of social and economic conditions in the eighteenth century metropolis is contained in the excellent book of Mrs. M. D. George, *London Life in the Eighteenth Century*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> London, 1924.



She liberally used contemporary sources, which are made available for further research in her detailed bibliography. She depicted in graphic detail the physical setting of the city — its narrow, dirty streets, ill-lighted, and filled with shaky buildings which had an alarming propensity to cave in upon the heads of the passers-by. Misson testified to the filth of the city, describing how the women must wear “patins” or “des galoches de fer” to protect their feet.<sup>1</sup> Miss Buer drew a vivid portrait of the insanitary physical conditions of the city: the lack of drainage, of street-cleaning, of running water — in fact, of all the amenities of urban life today.<sup>2</sup>

In this physical environment which was hardly favorable to the health of the most prosperous of the population, lived a constantly shifting mass of individuals in every station of life. The greater part of the populace consisted of the “meaner sort,” which meant, in the metropolis, the beggars, casual and common laborers, porters and the like.<sup>3</sup> The skilled, and even the semi-skilled artisans of certain trades were rather to be classed with the more prosperous tradesmen and shopkeepers — the “middling sort.” There was, as Mrs. George points out,<sup>4</sup> a hopeless confusion in the minds of both contemporaries and later historians, as to the makeup of the lower classes. They preferred to dismiss the whole problem from their minds by the designation of a class, without bothering to find out the elements the class contained.

The lower classes of London were distinguished by a lack of homogeneity which makes it difficult to deal with their conditions of life. In a country district where the population is comparatively stable, as is the kind of work to be done, it is possible to separate the various classes and describe them with some accuracy. Any urban centre has much more complicated laboring conditions. Especially is this true of London, with its minute

<sup>1</sup> Misson, H. *Mémoires et Observations*, The Hague, 1698, p. 337.

<sup>2</sup> Buer, Mabel. *Health, Wealth, and Population* . . . etc., London, 1926.

<sup>3</sup> George, M. D. *Op cit.*, see ch. IV on *The People and Trades of London*.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*



divisions between trades, and the constant shifting of the individuals who plied them.

One is particularly struck with the uncertainty of existence for the lower classes, in the London of this period.<sup>1</sup> Life itself was indeed precarious, to judge from the prevalence of crime, and of hanging for a penalty. The means of life were even more uncertain. Trade was largely seasonal,—the result of its being either a luxury industry for the notoriously uncertain markets of the upper classes, or connected with the vast shipping interests of which London was the centre. The rule of employment was over-work for a few days, and then no work at all. The habits of life of the populace intensified this irregularity of employment. The vast number of clubs, ale-houses, gin-shops, gambling-dives, amusements of all kinds were certainly no incentive to continuous work. On the other hand, they were the only resort of a population, frequently out of work, which lived largely in furnished rooms.<sup>2</sup> It was said of a man indicted for some minor offense that “he is only A poor Watchman has But Six Shillings a week to Live on and has neither house nor whom to go, but only a weekly lodge . . .”<sup>3</sup> Most of the better paid laborers shared his fate. The existence of such irregular employment led many to believe that unemployment was entirely due to obstinacy and laziness on the part of the workers, neglecting the obvious seasonal character of the work to be had.<sup>4</sup>

It is interesting to note the impression made by the London people upon visitors of the time. The Hon. Roger North, a county justice from Northamptonshire, complained that “about London the Inconvenience from Beggars is become almost insupportable; and that it proceeds not from meer Poverty, because there wants no Employment and Pay for them that will take it . . .”<sup>5</sup> This was in the late seventeenth century and that

<sup>1</sup> George, M.D. *Op. cit.*, ch. VI.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. II, especially pp. 85, 86.

<sup>3</sup> *Surrey Sessions Bundle* — 1738.

<sup>4</sup> Among many others, Defoe in *Giving Alms No Charity* — 1704 and Fielding in *An Enquiry into the Late Increase of Robbers* — 1751.

<sup>5</sup> *A Discourse of the Poor*, London, 1753, pp. 14, 15.

beggars did not decrease in number during the next century is assured from the continuance of similar complaints. Misson remarked on the great number of poor in the city.<sup>1</sup> Saussure could not get over the brutality of the people. He wrote in 1727—"I must now say a word about the populace, and I have already complained of its arrogance and rude behaviour. It has no education and little fear of God. I am even persuaded that many of this class never go to church, . . . and are addicted to all manner of debauch."<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, Archenholz was struck, if not by the education, by the native intelligence of even the rudest specimens of the people.<sup>3</sup> Meister was very favorably impressed by the mildness of the poor. He claimed that "the humanity and mild disposition of the lower kind of people is discoverable amidst all the confusion of their furious boxing-matches."<sup>4</sup> Moritz commented on the kindness of the common people to their children.<sup>5</sup>

The consensus of opinion is with Saussure. The lower classes in the eighteenth century were undoubtedly very brutal. At a latter date, too, the London laborers were described by one who had employed many of them, as of "the very worst class."<sup>6</sup> Meister and Moritz must have met individual exceptions or have been accustomed to even greater brutality in their own countries. The number of deserted children, the harshness of the customary treatment of apprentices;—all this is common enough knowledge. Of course one must beware of the fatal tendency to judge past history by the standards of present day society. All classes of society were brutal in the eighteenth century, but lack of resources, uncertainty of maintenance and existence, forced the lower classes into an even more rude way of life.

One great cause of the shifting character of the "lower orders"

<sup>1</sup> Misson, *op. cit.*, p. 339.

<sup>2</sup> Saussure, César de, *A Foreign View of England*, trans., London, 1902, p. 220.

<sup>3</sup> Archenholz, W. de, *A Picture of England*, trans., London, 1797, pp. 56, 57.

<sup>4</sup> *Letters Written during a Residence in England* (1789-91), trans., 1799, pp. 289, 290.

<sup>5</sup> *Travels*, Pinkerton, vol. II, p. 517.

<sup>6</sup> Evidence of James MacAdam, Surveyor, in the 1824 Report on Laborers' Wages.

was the influx of country gentry with their retinue. By the seventeenth century it had become fashionable for country gentlemen to spend part of the year in London. Eden remarked that the expense of living, increase of poor rate, etc., in 1632, were "attributed to the nobility and gentry residing constantly with their families in London."<sup>1</sup> John Cary complained in 1695 that "Another thing which hath increased our useless People is the Nobility and Gentrys leaving the Country, and choosing to reside in *London*, whither they bring up with them Multitudes of lusty young Fellows, who might have done good Service at the Plough had they continued there, but having now no other Employments than to hand on their Masters Coaches forget to work, and rarely or never return again to Labour."<sup>2</sup> The eighteenth century found the gentry well established in their London residences, with the attendant problems of fashion, luxury, and servants in full sway.

The particular class which we shall examine is that composed of the laborers and journeymen in the building trades. These laborers were somewhat more skilled than the lowest type of common laborer, and the journeyman who worked at all regularly, according to a contemporary description, "makes no contemptible figure in the world, and may live very happily." A journeyman should not marry, however, "without he can light upon a woman with a fortune sufficient to raise him above it."<sup>3</sup> The journeyman, then, was on the edge of the "middling sort," and his laborer was better off than many of the laboring group. The building trades appear to have held a middle position in the lower class ranks.

With the London of the eighteenth century in mind, it is now possible to turn to the available wage figures, with some background for their interpretation.

<sup>1</sup> *State of the Poor*, London, 1797, vol. I, p. 164.

<sup>2</sup> *An Essay on the State of England*, . . . Bristol, 1695, p. 155.

<sup>3</sup> Kearsley, George, *Table of Trades*, London, 1786, p. 31. This is a revised form of Joseph Collyer's *The Parents' and Guardians' Directory*, London, 1761.

## CHAPTER I

### WAGES IN THE CITY ITSELF

THE wages presented in the accompanying charts are for the building trades in Westminster and Southwark. The former were taken from bills handed in to the Westminster Abbey steward for payment, and are for repairs made on the Abbey itself and Abbey property in Westminster.<sup>1</sup> The Southwark figures are derived from workmen's bills preserved in the Quarter Sessions Bundles for Surrey, now in the London Sessions House at Newington. They represent work done on the county buildings, bridges, and roads.<sup>2</sup> The wages are daily rates and the length of the day seems to have varied during the century. Rough calculations from the bills show that the day was about eleven hours long in 1756, and about ten hours in 1779 and 1785.<sup>3</sup>

Although Westminster and Southwark were not technically within the city limits at that date, they were quite representative of London conditions. Maps of the period generally give the City, Westminster, and Southwark, treating the three districts, which were legally separate, as a unit.<sup>4</sup> As Defoe put it, "the two Cities of *London* and *Westminster*; and all the Burrough of *Southwark*, and all the Buildings and Villages included within the Bills of Mortallity, make but one London, . . . ."<sup>5</sup>

The Abbey figures show a remarkable uniformity. The common or general laborer received 1s.8d. per day almost continuously from 1700 to 1787, when the bills cease. The lapses from

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to L. Tanner, Esq., Assistant Keeper of the Abbey Muniments, for arranging for my use of the documents.

<sup>2</sup> A detailed discussion of the sources, as well as the statistical method used, may be found in the Appendices. The purely technical discussion has been segregated so that those primarily interested in statistics may study it undisturbed by the text, and so that it may not interfere with the main development of the argument.

<sup>3</sup> *Surrey Sessions Bundles*; Carpenter's bill in 1756 and 1785 Bundles; Bricklayer's bill in 1779 bundle.

<sup>4</sup> Hatton's *New View of London*, 1708, Map in vol. I.

<sup>5</sup> Defoe, Daniel, *A Tour Through . . . Great Britain*, 1724, vol. I, p. 121.



this level were few—to 1s.7d. in 1701 and 1702; to 1s.6d. in the period 1714–1734; and up to 1s.10d. in 1761. The bricklayers' and masons' labor have the same range—from 1s.8d. to 2s. In the case of the bricklayers' labor, the rate shot up to 2s. from 1s. 8d. in 1704, and then down to 1s. 10d. where it continues until 1734. From 1736 on, with one exception, the rate was steadily 2s. per day. The wages of masons' labor, on the other hand, remained almost continuously at 1s. 8d. until 1728, and in 1731 it jumped to 2s. there to remain for the rest of the period.

Both the paviors' and plasterers' labor show a greater range of variation; in the former case, from 1s.8d. to 2s.2d., and in the latter from 1s.8d. to 2s.4d. The paviors' laborers received 2s. practically throughout the period, except for a drop to 1s.8d. in the first three years of the century, and again in 1728, and a rise to 2s.2d. which lasted from 1763 to 1771, and then dropped back to the old rate of 2s. The wages available for the plasterers' labor are more scattered and exhibit greater variation. Examination of the chart indicates, however, that the daily wage was for the most part, 1s.10d. per day until 1734. Then came a rise to 2s. which continued, with occasional recessions to the 1s.10d. rate, until 1774. In 1779 the rate went up to 2s.4d. per day and remained at that level for the rest of the period.

A general tendency may be observed in the course of the wages of these laborers.<sup>1</sup> The median of the four types of labor (bricklayers', masons', paviors', and plasterers'), as may be seen from chart 1, indicates a gradual increase in wages from 1700 to 1734, and a stationary position of the wage rate from then on.

The wage data for the journeymen are available for a greater number of crafts; for the plumbers and carpenters, as well as for the others. The daily wage of the bricklayers, masons, and plumbers ranged between 2s.6d. and 3s. throughout the period. The range for the other three crafts was greater, from 2s.6d. to 3s.6d. in the case of the plasterers and paviors, and from 2s.6d. to 3s.4d. in the case of the carpenters. None of the craftsmen's wages rose in 1734 as did the laborers' wages. In general, the movement of

<sup>1</sup> We may exclude the general laborer, as his wage showed scarcely any variation throughout the century.

the laborers' and craftsmen's wages were very unlike. The plasterers' wage increased from 2s.6d. to 3s. in 1703, and apart from a drop from 1711 to 1718 remained at that figure until the late seventies. The same is true of the paviors except that their rates increased to 3s.4d. in 1763. The plumbers got 2s.6d.

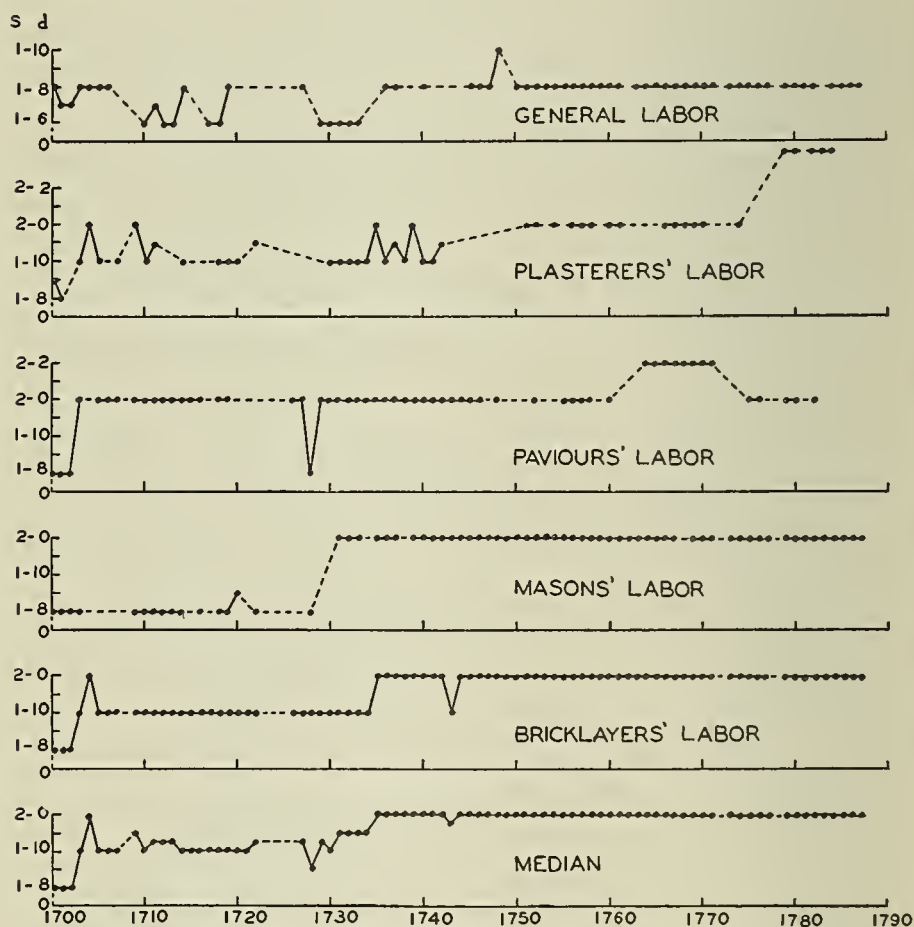


CHART 1—LABORERS' WAGES AT WESTMINSTER ABBEY

from 1700 to 1707, and 3s. from 1709 on without a break. The bricklayers' rates rose more gradually, on the whole. Although there was a sharp temporary increase to 3s. in 1704, the rate dropped back to 2s.8d. in 1706, and then went permanently up to 3s. in 1718. The wages of the masons and carpenters lagged, their increase from 2s.6d. to 3s. not occurring until the thirties.

The rates of the carpenters, paviors, and plasterers rose still further in the late sixties and seventies.

The chart of the medians (chart 2) indicates the general trend for the crafts. The median for all six crafts rose slowly to 2s.10d. in 1709. In the middle of the second decade this rate went back to 2s.8d., but rose gradually to an ever higher rate, reaching 3s. in 1718. Except for a very small recession in the forties, the three shilling rate continued until the end of the seventies. Then, in 1778, wages increased again, this time to 3s.2d. a day. If we exclude the plumbers and carpenters, in order to make the median curve for the crafts contain the same trades as the one for the laborers, there are one or two differences to be noted. The curve for the four trades goes up to 1s.10d. more sharply, and four years in advance of the curves for all crafts. There is a recession in the middle of the century, and the rise at the end is somewhat more accentuated. Generally speaking, however, the two curves are very similar.

The comparison of the movement of the wages of laborers and journeymen for each trade, and for the laborers and craftsmen as a whole, is of distinct interest. Of the individual trades, the greatest similarity is shown between the paviors and bricklayers and their laborers. The movement of the wages of masons and their laborers was practically identical in the early part of the century. But after 1730, the masons' wages show two drops which did not occur in the rates of the laborers. For the first fifteen years of the century the wages of the bricklayers and their labor moved in exactly the same manner. After that the laborers' wages lagged. The same sort of lag, as well as considerable dissimilarity of movement is to be observed in comparing the wages of the plasterers and their laborers.

The median curves for the four crafts have similar points of difference. The most important are as follows:

1. The rise of 1704 was a gain largely sustained for the craftsmen, while the laborers' wages immediately sank back half way.
2. The greatest increase in the wages of the craftsmen occurred in 1718; that for the laborers not until the thirties.

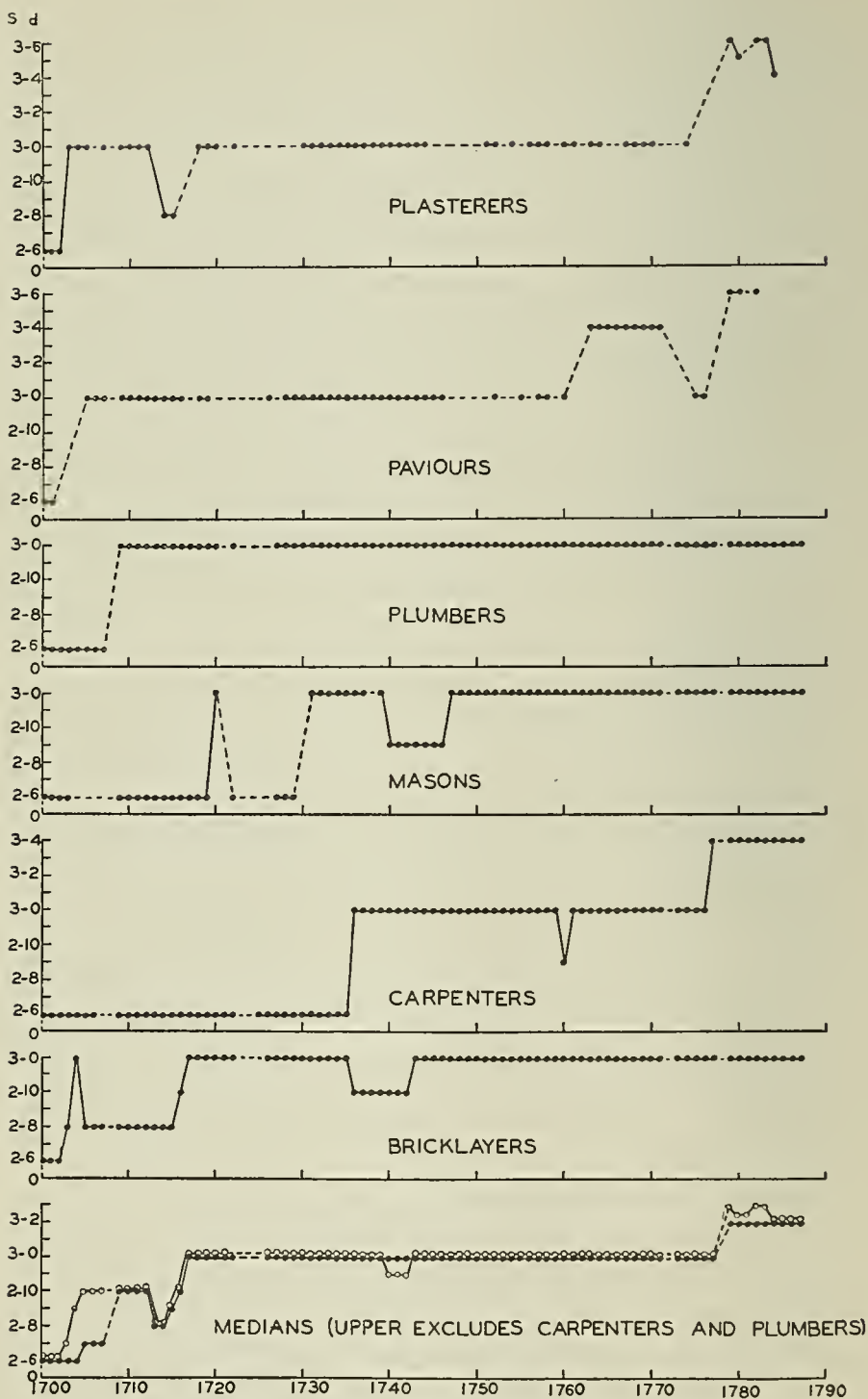


CHART 2—CRAFTSMEN'S WAGES AT WESTMINSTER ABBEY



3. The craftsmen's wages rose still further in 1778, but the laborers' rates did not change.

4. Throughout the period (1700-1787) laborers' wages increased from 1s.8d. to 2s., and that increase occurred over an interval of thirty-four years. The wages of craftsmen went from 2s.6d. to 3s.2d. Three-fourths of the rise took place in the first two decades of the century.

Before leaving the Abbey wage figures, there are a few scattered rates for work in the gardens and orchards to be noted. The "weeder woman" received 6d. a day in 1700 and 1701; 8d. from 1702 until the last date when such work is listed, namely 1718. Laborers who worked in the orchard were paid 1s.6d. per day until 1720. Then there is a gap in the figures until 1740, when the orchard laborer is listed again as receiving 1s.8d. per day until 1748, when he was paid 1s.10d. Here these figures cease.

The Southwark figures are much more discontinuous than those for the Abbey; a result of the fact that bills for work on county buildings were preserved largely by chance, and not in the orderly fashion of the Abbey records. A glance at the chart (3) of the laborers' wages indicates that the initial rate of 1s.10d. lasted until 1727<sup>1</sup> when 2s. was given. This rate, with the exception of 1742, continued until 1790, as far as the bricklayers' labor is concerned. Both the masons' and paviors' labor follow the bricklayers' labor, as far the scattered data go, except for a rate of 2s.2d. in 1775. From 1790 to 1796, the laborers of all the crafts received 2s.2d. per day.

The bricklayers in Southwark were paid 2s.8d. a day in 1708 and 3s. in 1717. A recession in 1742 was the only deviation in this rate up to 1790. At that date wages rose to 3s.4d. The only other craft, the figures for which are sufficiently continuous to chart, is that of the carpenters. The curve of their wages shows an unusual amount of variability. In 1708 the rate was 2s. per day. The next figure is for 1716—2s.6d., which continued until 1727. Here there occurs a sudden jump to 3s. Then, in the thirties, the rate sank back to 2s.8d. and 2s.6d., repeating the

<sup>1</sup> There can be little error in the assumption that the rates remained the same when the data are missing. The stability of rates is evident from the Abbey figures.

process in the decade 1750 to 1760. From 1770 to 1789, there seems to have been an unbroken rate of 3s. Beginning with the well-known price rise of 1790, the wage soared to 4s. in ten years. These unusual variations in the carpenters' wages, which are overemphasized graphically because of the frequent breaks in the data, are quite explicable on the grounds of differences in

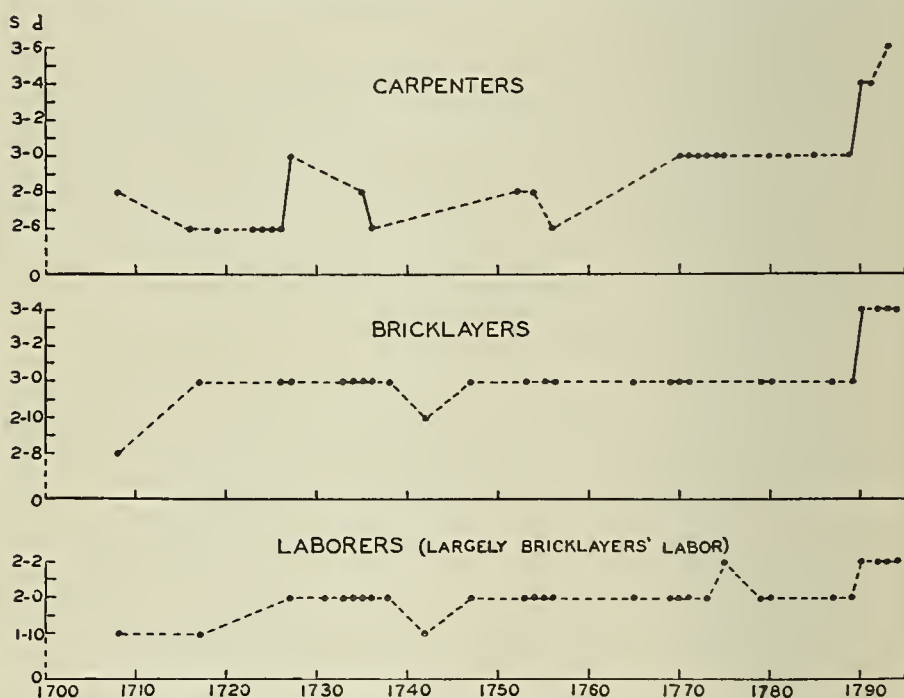


CHART 3—WAGES AT SOUTHWARK

the quality of work performed, which could not be discovered from the bare items in the bills.<sup>1</sup>

It may be observed that the bricklayers' wages in Southwark, where the rates were found, correspond exactly to the Abbey wages. The rates for the bricklayers' labor, however, show a difference in timing in the two districts. The Southwark wages for this type of labor rose to 2s. fully ten years before those at the Abbey. Otherwise the course of these wages is the same. The movement of carpenters' wages does not appear to coincide

<sup>1</sup> Further discussion of the importance of quality differences as a source of error will be found in the statistical appendix.

in the two districts. The Abbey figures show a steady rate of 2s.6d. until 1735, while the Southwark rate jumps about between 2s.6d. and 3s. within that period. Again, the Southwark figures, which are more continuous after 1770, remained at 3s. until 1790, but the Abbey carpenters were getting 3s.4d. per day after 1777. The masons' and paviors' rates are too scattered for much comparison but seem to follow the Abbey wages.

The close correspondence between the wage rates in both districts is strong evidence towards the conclusion that the same wages prevailed in Westminster and Southwark. Was there, however, any difference in wages within the city limits? Miss Hutchins has published wage rates for work done under the Department of Works for the first quarter of the century.<sup>1</sup> The work was done largely on public buildings such as the Tower of London. These wages appear to be somewhat higher than either the Westminster or Southwark figures for the same years. It is not easy to say, however, whether the apparent difference indicates a real divergence in the wages actually paid. The work itemized in the Declared Accounts was performed under contract and it is doubtful whether the laborers and journeymen received the wages listed. Quite evidently, too, Miss Hutchins has been unable to distinguish between quality differences, as she puts together rates which could not possibly have been paid for the same sort of work.<sup>2</sup>

Both Collyer and Kearsley quoted the current weekly wages for the building trades in 1761 and 1786 respectively. Comparison of their figures with the Abbey rates shows that in almost every case the Abbey workmen received the upper limit of the wage rates listed by these two men.<sup>3</sup> The Abbey carpenters apparently

<sup>1</sup> Declared Account wages quoted by B. L. Hutchins in the *Economic Journal*, vol. X, p. 104.

<sup>2</sup> For example, 2s.9d., 2s.6d., 1s.8d. are all quoted as bricklayers' wages in 1716, and 2s.9d. and 1s.10d. for masons in 1718. The 1s.8d. and 1s.10d. quite obviously apply to the laborers in these trades.

<sup>3</sup> See the summary of each trade in Collyer, J., *The Parents' and Guardians' Directory*, London, 1761, and Kearsley, G., *Table of Trades*, London, 1786.

Collyer — Journeymen's Wages (1761)

Bricklayer 2s.6d. to 3s. per day (pp. 75-6)

Carpenter 2s.6d. " " (p. 93)

received higher wages in both these years. The figures are sufficiently alike, however, to make it clear that the Abbey wages may be safely used as typical of not only Westminster and Southwark, but of the whole London area. The small differences in the wage rates for the two rates also coincide with the fact of the constancy of the Abbey wages after 1735.

The question of contracts comes up in connection with both the Westminster and Southwark figures. The normal method of carrying out work in the London building trades was for a master craftsman to contract for a piece of work, such as a new building, or repairs, and then to hire his own workmen for the job, using his own materials. This was the method by which the repair of county buildings and roads in Surrey was carried on and affects the Southwark figures. Copies of the contracts are occasionally to be found among the Sessions papers. The following notice was published by the Clerk of the Peace in 1749 in both the *Gazette* and the *Daily Advertiser* and illustrates the way in which such contracts were made:

“Surrey

“Notice is hereby given to all Workmen that are willing to Contract for the Repairs of the Wharfing at the end of Chertsea bridge in the County of Surrey to Apply to Thomas Miller Esq<sup>r</sup> Clerk of the Peace in Took’s Court near Chancery lane for the Particulars of the s<sup>d</sup> Repairs and to leave an Estimate then sealed on or before the first Day of October next.

Miller

Clerk of the Peace.”<sup>1</sup>

Similar notices in the records of other counties indicate that this was the usual manner of arranging for the county repairs.

Mason	2s.6d. to 3s.	per day	(p. 189)
Paviour	2s.6d.	“ “	(p. 213)
Plasterer	2s.6d. to 4s.	“ “	(p. 217)
Plumber	2s.6d. to 3s.6d.	“ “	(p. 220)
Kearsley —	(1786)		
Bricklayer	2s.4d. to 3s.6d.	per day	
Carpenter	2s.6d. to 3s.	“ “	
Joiner	2s.6d. to 3s.6d.	“ “	
Mason	2s.6d. to 3s.6d.	“ “	
Paviour	2s.6d. to 3s.6d.	“ “	
Plasterer	2s.8d. to 3s.	“ “	
Plumber	2s.6d. to 3s.6d.	“ “	

<sup>1</sup> *Surrey Sessions Bundle*, 1749.



It is quite in accord with the general tendency to farm out various county business, such as the passing of vagrants and the upkeep of prisons. The practice was most prevalent in the large counties and cities.

Another type of contract is that in which one master was appointed bricklayer or carpenter to an institution not for one job only but over a term of years. The work for the government departments was done under this form of contract, and the Abbey workmen apparently were hired by this sort of arrangement. At least a letter found among the Abbey papers points to it as the normal procedure.

"The Bishop of Rochester's Compliments wait on M<sup>r</sup>. Merest—He has been applied to by M<sup>r</sup>. Snow and others to succeed the late M<sup>r</sup>. Whitehead as Plaisterer to the Abbey; but the bearer, M<sup>r</sup>. Fox, having done all his work of that sort here at Bromley to satisfaction, and being now in the house about some little jobs, the Bishop thinks it incumbent on him to give M<sup>r</sup>. Fox the preference, being persuaded that he is an able and honest workman; and therefore desires M<sup>r</sup>. Merest to let M<sup>r</sup>. Wyat or Blower know that he is to have notice when any Plaisterer's work is wanting to be done."<sup>1</sup>

Such a contract might make possible a lag of wages behind the current rates if the workmen were hired for a specific figure and in turn hired laborers and journeymen in the same manner. There is no indication that this was the case at the Abbey. The same workmen sent in bills including different rates over a period of years and the fact that the Abbey and Southwark rates were practically the same shows that in these two cases, at least, the wages paid under short and long term contracts did not differ.

It is quite possible, however, that the contractors under any kind of contract might shave a penny or two off the wages they listed on the bills as paid to their workmen and laborers. A case of this sort occurred in connection with the rebuilding of St. Paul's in the early part of the century. It was claimed that Mr. Jennings, a master carpenter, who had been allowed 15s. a week for each of his undercarpenters, had paid them only 7 to 12s. a week for four years.<sup>2</sup> It is not likely, however, that this was

<sup>1</sup> Letter dated 1781, no. 498622 of the Westminster Abbey Muniments.

<sup>2</sup> Manuscripts of the Duke of Portland, vol. X, p. 104.

very often the case in London. Malcolm remarked that in 1736 "Several severe combats occurred between the English and Irish in other parts of the town, . . . The cause appears to have originated chiefly through the parsimony of the person who contracted to erect the new church of St. Leonard Shoreditch, in employing no other than Irish labourers at five or six shillings a week, when the British demanded twelve shillings."<sup>1</sup> The latter rate corresponds to the median rate paid to the Abbey laborers in that year and seems to signify that the current rate was well-known and actually paid to the laborers. The Abbey figures were also the same as the current wages quoted by Collyer and Kearsley. It may be remembered, too, that the London laborers, as this anecdote and previously quoted opinions of foreigners show, were people not likely to submit to being underpaid. The laborers' bargaining power was increased as well by the demand for labor which was accentuated by the expansion of building in eighteenth century London.<sup>2</sup> It will be assumed, therefore, that the London laborers and journeymen were paid the current rates in the bills used in this study.<sup>3</sup>

Before beginning the discussion of the course of real wages in London during the century, it is necessary to determine whether the building trade wages were representative of London wages as a whole. A comparison of weekly wages in the building trades with other trades listed in Kearsley shows that the rates paid in the building trades were approximately the same as those given in trades such as the watchmaker, tobacconist, pewterer, copper-smith, and other of the more highly paid sort.<sup>4</sup> Mrs. George appears to use the building trades as typical. Her estimate of

<sup>1</sup> *Anecdotes . . . of London during the Eighteenth Century*, London, 1808, p. 275.

<sup>2</sup> See a letter in Fergusson, *Letters of Mrs. Calderwood*, 1756, which observed that the prevalence of high wages in London indicated that the country was unable to provide the city with enough servants. Probably it was true of all laborers and craftsmen.

<sup>3</sup> Little is known about the position and influence of the guilds in the eighteenth century, but it is probably that they had little control over their trades. There is no evidence that they influenced wage rates. See Unwin, *Industrial Organization in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Oxford, 1904, and Stella Kramer, *The Decline of the Craft Guild*, New York, 1927.

<sup>4</sup> See *Op. cit.* The hatmaker was better paid and the bakers and shoemakers, as examples among many, were lower paid than the building trades.

average wages, however is somewhat lower than the Abbey figures, and there are differences in timing. She says "Before 1765, speaking very broadly, labourers' wages varied from 9s. to 12s. a week, 10s. being perhaps the usual rate. The 'common wage of a journeyman' in the less well-paid trades were then from 12s. to 14s. or 15s. In the seventies they seem to have been from 15s. upwards."<sup>1</sup> At the Abbey the figures were at the upper limit; laborers receiving 11s. per week<sup>2</sup> from 1705 to 1735, and 12s. from then until 1787. The craftsmen were paid 15s. per week until the twenties; 18s. until the seventies, and after that 19s. each week. The evidence strengthens the conclusion that the building trades were among the better paid trades. Professor Bowley found, however, that the building trades were on the whole representative of all wages, in his nineteenth century investigation of wages.<sup>3</sup> They may be taken, therefore, as representing average London rates among the laborers in a "middling" position, neither of the highest nor the lowest groups.

### THE COURSE OF REAL WAGES

The money wages which have been discussed in the previous section do not offer in themselves a basis for estimating the condition of the laborer in London. Especially in the eighteenth century, money wages were only a part, and often a small part (particularly in the country districts) of what the laborer earned. The question of perquisites in the form of house rent, meals, fuel, and the like is one which did not enter largely into the life of the London laborer. Nevertheless, drink was customarily given each day to the workmen, along with their wages, at least at the beginning of the century,<sup>4</sup> and other privileges were customary. We find the workmen who built the new House of Cor-

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 164.

<sup>2</sup> On the assumption of a six day week.

<sup>3</sup> Bowley, A. L., *Wages in the United Kingdom in the Nineteenth Century*, London, 1900, p. 63.

<sup>4</sup> The Abbey bills frequently contain items for "drink for the workmen." The practice is also shown by the Webbs' quotation from the Petty Sessions of St. George, Hanover Square, to the effect that the justice forbade provision of strong drink for laborers on roads (see *Parish and County*, p. 405).

rection in Westminster petitioning the justices' committee in charge for "a Treat according to antient custom." The committee resolved "that Mr. Rogers be impowered to allow the Workmen a Sum not exceeding Ten guineas at and after the rate of 2s.6d. for each" at the completion of a portion of the building.<sup>1</sup> As Professor Bowley points out, it is not wages alone, but total *earnings* (including perquisites and payment in kind) which must be considered.<sup>2</sup> And in discussing earnings, not only the earnings of the man but those of the other members of the family must be dealt with. Women and children frequently contributed to the family fund, by spinning and weaving at home, by weeding, etc.<sup>3</sup> Again, however, there were less opportunities for this sort of thing in London, as the century went on, and industry moved away from the city. It is sufficient to indicate here that the money wages of the man cannot be regarded as the sole source of support of the family.

It needs to be borne in mind as well that the wage series under scrutiny are *daily* rates. Any attempt to estimate the workers' standard of living must allow for the number of days lost in a year. Especially is this true of the building trades; as Collyer remarked concerning the bricklayers "as they work in the open air, they are obliged to be idle several months in the year."<sup>4</sup> Apart from the loss of work caused by the weather, the building trades were employed fairly steadily. In the Abbey bills, 20 to 50 days for a job were not uncommon and the general laborer was employed all the year round, or for approximately 300 days regularly.<sup>5</sup> The demand for workers in the building trades was due to the steady expansion of London into the outlying districts and the continual rebuilding within the city walls. Defoe thought that it was "the Disaster of *London*, as to the Beauty of

<sup>1</sup> *Minutes of the Committee for Building the New House of Correction*, vol. I, Oct. 13, 1792, at the Middlesex Guild Hall, Westminster.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 41.

<sup>3</sup> See *supra*, p. 13 for figures on weeding at Westminster Abbey.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 76.

<sup>5</sup> For example, a bricklayer's laborer worked 25½ days in 1705, and carpenters 32½ days in 1714 and 28 days in 1746, and general laborers 304 days in the same year.



its Figure, that it thus stretched out in Buildings, just at the Pleasure of every Builder, or Undertaker of Buildings. . . ."<sup>1</sup> As far as London is concerned, therefore, loss of time on account of non-existence of work was a negligible factor in these trades.

No attempt has been made to transpose the daily rates into weekly or yearly figures. Any such process involves a great deal of approximation and the original figures are subject to sufficient error without adding more.<sup>2</sup> Further, weekly figures (which have been used by many authors, including Young and Bowley) involve the assumption that the laborers worked a full six day week. Although, as is noted above, opportunity for work was not lacking in the building trades, contemporary evidence indicates that few cared to take advantage of their opportunities. The description of the London laborer as working for three or four days and getting drunk for the rest of the week on his earnings is a favorite with the eighteenth century opponents of high wages. Sir William Temple is a good example of this school of thought. He says—"The best spur to industry is necessity. The mass of labourers work only to relieve the present want, and are such votaries to indolence, ease and voluptuousness, that they sacrifice all considerations to the pleasures of the present moment, regardless of sickness and old age."<sup>3</sup> It is not the place to deal with this point of view, nor the answers it has received from contemporaries and later critics. Suffice it to say that the idea was commonly enough expressed to make one feel that it was not merely due to prejudice. Behind this exaggerated picture there must have been some modicum of truth. The condition of life and habits of the people were all against the monotony of regular employment. If one is to judge the prevailing atmosphere in any way by such works as *Moll Flanders* and *The Beggars' Opera*, a dishonest and adventurous method of earning a living evidently had more appeal to a number of the populace, than the drab business of working steadily day by day.

The conflict of opinion on the life of the working men is sharply

<sup>1</sup> Defoe, *Tour thro' . . . Great Britain*, 1725, vol. II, p. 95.

<sup>2</sup> For further elaboration see Statistical Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> *A Vindication of Commerce and Arts*, 1758, p. 31. (McCulloch's edition.)

illustrated by Grosley and Saussure. The former remarked on the large wages of the London artisan as compared with the Parisian, and the fact that this gain was enhanced by their regular morals and conduct.<sup>1</sup> Saussure was also struck by the good wages of the London workmen, but he claimed that "most London artisans are debauched and drunkards, the greater part of their week's gain being spent on Sundays alone."<sup>2</sup> It is possible to find any amount of corroboration for either point of view.

With all these qualifications upon the use of daily wages in mind, they may still be used as a tentative measure of the laborer's standard of living. They are, at any rate, the only kind of statistical evidence available.

The statistical measurement of real wages is severely limited by the lack of continuous price series for the century. The only continuous series which the author has been able to secure is that for wheat. The figures, which have been lent by Sir William Beveridge, were originally expressed in shillings per quarter, but have been reduced to the price per one-half peck, in order to facilitate their comparison with the wage series. The accompanying chart exhibits the Abbey wages as compared with the London Assize prices of wheat.

Let us for the present forget that wheat is far from an adequate measure of the laborer's budget, and see what happened to wages in terms of wheat during the century. It will help in the comparison if it is kept in mind that a family of six (man, wife, and four children) consumed approximately one-half a peck a day.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *A Tour to London . . . 1765*, trans. T. Nugent, 1772, p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> *A Foreign View of England*, trans., London, 1902, p. 219.

<sup>3</sup> This approximation is the result of estimates from two entirely different sources. Steffen, in his calculations on a similar line, assumed 6.59 persons per family (an average of Eden's budgets), and that one quarter of wheat was consumed annually by each person. The latter is the famous estimate given in Smith's *Three Tracts on the Corn Trade*, p. 220. Assuming a family of six, and a quarter annually for each person per year, about one half a peck (.52 pecks, to be exact) would be consumed daily per family. From another source, a farm account book quoted by Dr. Hubert Hall, a family of servants (size not given) is said to consume a bushel of grain each week. This amounts to a little over a half peck daily. Consequently, a half a peck seems an accurate enough approximation around which to centre the discussion.

See Steffen, *Op. cit.*, pp. 86-94, for a discussion of his wheat, and wheat-meat

The first striking fact brought out by the chart (4) is the stability of wages as compared with prices. One would expect some greater variation of prices than wages, but such an extreme difference is amazing at first. At first sight the contractual nature of London wages might seem to explain the extraordinary

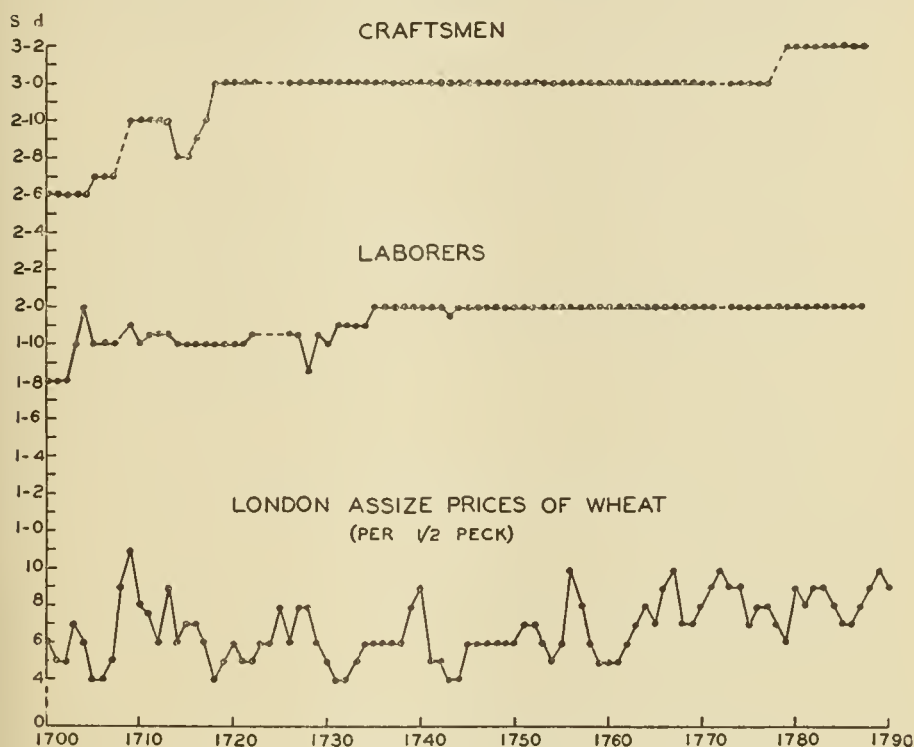


CHART 4—MEDIAN WAGES OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY

constancy of wages, but we shall see that all the wages used in this study exhibit the same relative lack of movement. It was not until after the nineties that wage rates fluctuated comparably to the movement in modern times.

The second obvious conclusion from the chart is more important. During the period 1710-1750 when the trend of prices was slightly downward, the trend of wages was distinctly upward. Both these trends seem small, especially as compared to modern measure of daily wages. The indexes cannot be used in the present study, because Steffen took Rogers' ten year averages for the whole of England, and has no regional figures.

fluctuations, but judged from an eighteenth century standpoint they are highly significant. It was not until the last decade of the century, when the tremendous rise in prices forced other economic phenomena to follow, that the rate of change in wage rates became more rapid. The chief gains both in real and money wages were made during the first half of the century, according to the chart. So far the figures substantiate the well known eulogies which designate the first part of the eighteenth century as the "golden age" of labor.

Broadly speaking, laborers (on the above assumption of a family of six consuming one-half a peck of wheat daily) spent approximately 6d. each day for wheat up to 1750.<sup>1</sup> During this period, wages were, up to 1735, 1s. 10d. per day, so that a little more than one-fourth of the daily wage was spent on bread. In 1735 the wages rose to 2s. per day, so that the family bread cost somewhat nearer one-fourth or a little less of the daily wage. The craftsman was, of course, in a better condition. For the first ten years of the century he had to spend about one-fifth of his wages for wheat, a little more than one-sixth during the next decade, and from 1730 to 1750, exactly one-sixth of his daily wage.

Undoubtedly the purchasing power of London wages rose in terms of wheat during the first fifty years of the century. The important point is, however, whether this rise was sustained, or was wiped out by the increasing prices and economic changes of the latter part of the period. The money wages of laborers did not change from 1735 to 1790. Prices however, began to rise slightly in the fifties. The average price of one-half peck of wheat was, progressively by decade, 7d., 7d., 8d., and 8d. In other words, the laborer had to spend 30 per cent of his wage on bread and then about one-third as the century went on. Again, the craftsmen were in a more advantageous position, for their wages rose at the end of the seventies to meet the increased prices. Their daily wheat expenditure took almost one-fifth

<sup>1</sup> Decennial averages of prices: (per one-half peck)

1700-09	6d.	1730-39	6d.	1760-69	7d.
1710-19	6½d.	1740-49	6d.	1770-79	8d.
1720-29	6d.	1750-59	7d.	1780-89	8d.



of their earnings in the fifties and sixties; and slightly more than one-fifth in the next two decades.

As a whole the purchasing power of wages in terms of wheat shows a slight decrease after 1750. The decrease is not in itself, however, sufficient to establish a pessimistic view of their position. It is in single years of bad harvests, such as 1709, 1727, 1740, 1756, 1767, and 1772, to mention the outstanding cases, that the price of wheat must have had the most deleterious effect upon the laborer's budget. 1709 was a particularly bad year. The annual figures do not show the full force of the high prices, for in October, 1709, the quarter sessions meeting at Hicks Hall set the price of "very good English middling wheat" at eighty-four shillings per quarter, or 1s.3½d. per one-half peck, fully 3½d. higher than the average annual figure.<sup>1</sup> The price was fixed after an investigation into the high prices which the justices appeared to think were due to "engrossing and forestalling." Even on the basis of the annual figure the laborer would have had to spend 70 per cent of his wages on wheat alone. Both wage curves show an advance in that year and it is not unreasonable to assume that prices had some casual effect. The jump in prices in 1703 may have had something to do with the wage increase of 1703-05, and the same relationship may be indicated by the similarity between the wage and price curves from 1730 to 1735. Generally speaking, however, it is remarkable to observe the singular lack of relationship between wages and the price of wheat.

In 1766 and 1767 prices were so high as to cause rioting by the poor all over England. At a meeting of the grand jury in Southwark the following petition to members of Parliament was drawn up:

"We the grand jury for the town and borough of Southwark, and others the inhabitants thereof, . . . sensibly touched with the just complaints of the poor of this borough, as well as of those of the nation in general, occasioned by the present enormous price of every necessary of life, and the almost total stagnation of many valuable branches of our manufactures in consequence thereof, think we should be wanting in the duty we owe to our inhabitants, did we not employ every means in our power to procure a removal of this national evil . . . and as we apprehend nothing will so read-

<sup>1</sup> *Middlesex Sessions Books* for July, 1709.

ily effect this as the immediate prohibition of the exportation of all sort of grain, that of bread corn more especially, . . . we do hereby require and instruct you to exert your best endeavours in parliament to obtain such prohibition, . . . ?”<sup>1</sup>

Whether or not the petition was effective, Parliament did proclaim against forestalling, engrossing, and regrating in September, 1766.

The movement of wages from 1701 to 1720 may have been affected by the numerous ups and downs in the financial world, which, of course, influenced trade and the general economic situation. Scott lists eight crises during these twenty years<sup>2</sup> which may account for the unusual variability of wages in this period. Malcolm relates several incidents which must have had some effect on the people more directly: “a most dreadful fire” at Limehouse in December, 1716, which caused great distress among the inhabitants;<sup>3</sup> a very wet spring in 1725, which deprived many haymakers near London of their livelihood;<sup>4</sup> and a spell of unfavorable weather in July, 1764, including a hail-storm, which “did infinite damage to the grain near London.”<sup>5</sup> The last two events may explain the price increases of those years, but wages were apparently not affected.

The above analysis of the course of London wages shows a rising trend of real wages in the first half of the century, which is not seriously challenged by the small increase in the price level which took place from 1750 to 1790. It now remains to be seen how far wheat was representative of the laboring budget. It is obvious that one item is not a satisfactory measure of the standard of living of a group, but the error involved is less for the eighteenth century than it would be today. The budget of the lower classes was then far simpler than a corresponding budget of modern times, and, as is always true of a lower standard of living, food, and especially, bread, bulked large. Although the reliance

<sup>1</sup> Chamberlain, J., *History of London* . . . , 1769, p. 402.

<sup>2</sup> Scott, W. R., *The Constitution . . . of Joint Stock Companies to 1720*, Cambridge, vol. I, 1912, p. 467.

<sup>3</sup> *Anecdotes . . . of London*, p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.



on wheat prices as a measure of real wages should not be uncritical, its use as budgetary index is not misleading, at any rate for the London area, if it is employed with due qualification. Those who object to the use of wheat as a criterion of working class expenditure, such as Hasbach, state that the laborer did not eat wheat bread to any great extent.<sup>1</sup> This is a question which can only be answered for the whole of England by regional study.<sup>2</sup>

For the area of which London was the most important part, wheat increasingly became the chief grain used for bread throughout the century. Charles Smith estimated that nearly 89 per cent of the population in this district consumed wheat bread in 1764.<sup>3</sup> Malthus noted "the general change from bread of a very inferior quality to the best wheaten bread" which seems to have been "peculiar to the southern and midland counties . . .".<sup>4</sup> Travellers commented upon the extraordinarily widespread use of wheat. For example, Pehr Kalm remarked that "the bread which here in England was everywhere and exclusively used . . . was large loaves . . . baked of wheatflour, . . . Other bread is next to never eaten. Most Englishmen had scarcely heard tell of rye-bread . . . ; few had seen it, and still fewer were those who had eaten it. . . . This ought all to be understood of those who lived in London and the provinces immediately round; . . ."<sup>5</sup>

Judging from workhouse dietaries, bread formed the greater part of the diet of the inhabitants. It is not unreasonable to suppose that the meals of workhouse inmates resembled those of their brethren without the walls. If anything, the workhouse meals were probably better, at least more regular. The following is a typical bill of fare for a week: a breakfast of bread, butter, and cheese four times a week, varied with beef broth on two

<sup>1</sup> *History of the English Agricultural Labourer*, London, 1908, p. 126.

<sup>2</sup> Sir W. Ashley, in his posthumous book, *The Bread of Our Forefathers*, London, 1928, has collected the best contemporary sources on the kind of bread eaten in various centuries. His eighteenth century sources are the same as those used in this study: Charles Smith, Eden, Davies, and the like; agricultural surveys; and travels.

<sup>3</sup> *Tracts on the Corn Trade*, 1804, p. 208.

<sup>4</sup> *Principles of Political Economy*, 1836, p. 229 (p. 198 in the 1821 ed.).

<sup>5</sup> *Travels in England in 1748* (trans., J. Lucas, 1892), p. 88.

mornings, and bread and beer on Sundays; dinners consisting of beef and broth twice a week, pease-porridge, rice milk, plus dumpplings, barley broth, and milk porridge, respectively, for the rest of the week; supper of a dull sameness, being bread, butter and cheese without variation.<sup>1</sup> A note added that "In Summer-time, Pease, Beans, Greens, and Roots are allow'd, as the Season affords."

The average laborer probably did not do as well as this as a regular thing. Bread, cheese, and beer, were his staple diet, with meat perhaps once a week. He drank poor quality tea and made increasing use of sugar as the century went on.<sup>2</sup> Eden described him as eating a good deal of fat bacon and salt fish as well. Grosley was surprised at the small amount of bread eaten, remarking that "even among the lower sort" they live "principally on animal food. . . ."<sup>3</sup> This is undoubtedly overstated, due to the fact that practically no meat was eaten by the laboring classes in France, and the small amount consumed by the English laborer seemed large in comparison. However, the prisoners at Newgate could complain that they were deprived of their weekly beef allowance,<sup>4</sup> and some amount of meat was evidently consumed by all. A journeyman would have had a higher dietary standard than the laborer, probably including more meat, and greater variety in general.

The habits of drunkenness which were so rife in the eighteenth century were not restricted to the upper classes. Besides the beer, which really formed a part of the food of the people all over England, the London population succumbed to the influence of spirits, especially gin. From 1720 to 1760, there was practically an epidemic and with as many disastrous results. Valpy-French set 1724 as the date when the "passion for gin-drinking infected the

<sup>1</sup> *An Account of Several Workhouses*, London, 1725, p. 5. This is the account of a workhouse at Bishopsgate. There are other accounts in the pamphlet; also in Eden; Gonzalez gives a graphic description of the food given to orphans at Christs Hospital, *op. cit.*, pp. 64, 65.

<sup>2</sup> See Botsford; also Bryn Mawr monograph on sugar. Ellis, Ellen D., *An Introduction to the History of Sugar* . . . , Philadelphia, 1905.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 140. Grosley's remarks probably apply more to the class above the laborers.

<sup>4</sup> *Middlesex Sessions Books*, No. 597 (July, 1702), p. 42.

masses of the population, and spread with the violence of an epidemic."<sup>1</sup> Henry Fielding estimated in 1751 that gin was "the principal sustenance (if it may be so called) of more than an hundred thousand people in this Metropolis . . . ."<sup>2</sup> Joseph Hanway complained that it was permitted even in workhouses.<sup>3</sup> Chamberlain said: "The use of spirituous liquors was at this time (1736) become so general among the inferior sort of people and so destructive to the morals of the populace, that the parliament, . . . enacted," . . . against it.<sup>4</sup>

Saussure commented amusingly on the habitual beer-drinking of the Londoners:

"Would you believe it, though water is to be had in abundance in London, and of fairly good quality, absolutely none is drunk? The lower classes, even the paupers, do not know what it is to quench their thirst with water. . . . nothing but beer is drunk, . . ."<sup>5</sup>

Silliman considered that "porter, from its nutritious qualities, contributes much to that florid and robust appearance which the English labouring people possess in so remarkable degree, and which is found more or less in all ranks."<sup>6</sup> And yet, Chamberlayne, in his various editions of *Angliæ Notitia*, from 1694 to 1756, could cheerfully boast ". . . it may be affirmed, that at present there is generally less excess in drinking (especially about London, since the use of Coffee, Tea, and Chocolate) . . ." Excess, of course, is a relative term, but it is no exaggeration to apply it to the drinking habits of the London population during the first half of the century. It is true that as the century advanced, the increasing use of tea, of sugar, of fruit and other things previously luxuries for the upper classes, led to less concentration on beer and bread, the old staples of working class diet.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Nineteen Centuries of Drink in England*, London, 1884, p. 271.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> *An Essay on Tea*, London, 1756, p. 239.

<sup>4</sup> Chamberlain, *op. cit.*, p. 298.

<sup>5</sup> *A Foreign View of England*, pp. 157-58.

<sup>6</sup> Silliman, *Journal of Travels in England*, vol. III, p. 89.

<sup>7</sup> See Buer, Botsford and others. The whole question of the introduction of new commodities will be discussed in the last section. Also Silliman, at the end of the century, remarked that "spirituous liquors" were too dear for the laborers to purchase. See *Idem*.

## OTHER ELEMENTS IN THE STANDARD OF LIVING

Is is distinctly unnecessary to duplicate Mrs. George's work on London by a minute description of the amusements and clubs of the lower classes. The fondness of the London working classes for walking in the parks, frequenting amusement places such as Ranelagh and Vauxhall, the rough sports of bull-baiting, cock fighting and so on, were continual matters of comment by travelers.<sup>1</sup> Fielding objected to the fact that there were places "where the meanest Person who can dress himself clean, may in some Degree mix with his Betters, and thus perhaps satisfy his Vanity as well as his Love of Pleasure."<sup>2</sup> Macky confirmed the lack of class distinction in his description of Newmarket—"All Mankind are here upon equal Level, from the Duke to the Country-Peasant . . . ;"<sup>3</sup> The same persons remarked with surprise upon the number of clubs where all ranks met to discuss public affairs. Everyone from the bootblack up was a member of some informal organization.

One of the chief amusements of the laborers was not appreciated by the authorities. From 1709 until 1768 orders for the suppression of interludes, either at fairs, or in playhouses erected by the actors were practically continuous.<sup>4</sup> The fairs themselves came in for a good deal of condemnation, but it was the interlude players who were most out of favor. The reason given in the official minutes was always the same. It was because "the acting of such Plays and Drolls . . . does manifestly and directly tend to the Encouragement of Vice and Immorality and to the debauching and ruining of Servants Apprentices and others as well as to the disturbance of the Publique Peace . . ."<sup>5</sup> Solicitude for the morals of the lower classes was always expressed. The continuance of these orders for suppression is evidence of their ineffectiveness. Thus it went on until 1746 when the Middlesex

<sup>1</sup> Grosley, Saussure, Gonzalez, Misson, etc., all comment.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> *A Journey through England*, 1714, p. 91. Research has convinced Professor Gay that Macky is no other than Defoe under one of his many pseudonyms.

<sup>4</sup> See the *Middlesex Sessions Books* for this period.

<sup>5</sup> *Middlesex Orders of Court*, vol. III (July, 1725), pp. 19, 20.



justices inaugurated a campaign to put a final stop to the fairs which were arranged so as to follow each other continuously from May to September. A letter from the justices to Lord Hardwicke, the Lord High Chancellor, expounded the evils of fairs in full:

"The poor grow even poorer and many Families are thrown on their respective parishes by reason that the Heads of such Families cannot resist the Temptation of frequenting the Fairs in the Summer season where they either wantonly spend and squander away in drinking and Gaming or at these Shows and Drolls that Little they had reserved for the support of themselves and Children, or are cheated and defrauded of what little money they have by Gamesters."<sup>1</sup>

The concern of the justices had no more effect than previously, for the books for the years immediately after 1746 still abounded with orders for suppressing the fairs. In the fifties, however, there were only two such orders and in the sixties two more,<sup>2</sup> and as far as I went in the seventies there were none.<sup>3</sup> The lack of orders may indicate either that the policy of suppression had become effective or merely that the justices grew weary of attacking an institution so widely supported. Probably the more extreme form of nuisance was stopped after the advent of Henry Fielding at Bow Street. Also the attitude towards drolls and interludes underwent a change. From treating actors like vagabonds and rogues, people began to consider them as useful members of society, and in the last two decades of the century they were given permission to perform their plays for limited periods.

The orders for suppression of gaming houses, bull baiting, etc., had as little success as those for the suppression of fairs, although the justices did their best. One clever butcher thought that he would escape the official eye by advertising that the bull would afterwards be killed and the meat given to the poor, as well as the money which was taken in. The court was suspicious, however, and ordered the affair stopped.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Middlesex Orders of Court*, vol. V (May, 1746), pp. 89d, 90.

<sup>2</sup> One is an expense account of two Bench clerks for suppressing an "intended Fair" from the *Surrey Sessions Bundle* for 1764.

<sup>3</sup> To 1775 in the *Middlesex Books*.

<sup>4</sup> *Middlesex Orders of Court*, vol. VI (September 1753), pp. 12, 12d.

Besides being the leading means of recreation of the poor these fairs served an economic purpose. It was at such occasions that the lower classes could buy the trinkets that increasing commerce was bringing in. Many made their living by selling these things. There were consequently some protests at the judicial opposition to fairs. In 1719 the inhabitants of the parish of St. George the Martyr in Southwark petitioned the court that the ban against the fair there be annulled, as they stood to lose considerably by its failure.<sup>1</sup>

A good deal of the laborers' daily wage must have trickled away at the fair, as well as at the gin shop or tavern. Another important item of expenditure was his dress. Eden observed that many of his clothes were bought second hand,<sup>2</sup> but a good deal of clothing was probably paid for by the master,<sup>3</sup> or handed down by the mistress. Wigs were worn by the poorest of individuals, as Kalm observed with some surprise.<sup>4</sup> The men wore large black felt hats, knee breeches of wool buckskin, and sometimes leather jackets. The women wore gowns of wool, cotton or silk, with an astonishing number of petticoats and stays underneath short red cloaks (it was a favorite color) and large hats.<sup>5</sup>

One of the most important developments in the dress of the lower classes was the increasing use of cotton, and therefore washable clothes. Early in the century calico was imported from India to the detriment of the woolen weavers. The Spitalfield weavers made a great clamor. The "poor weavers" made the "just complaint" that

"all the mean People, the Servant-maids and indifferent poor people, who would otherwise cloath themselves, and were usually cloathed in this Womens stuffs made at Norwich and London . . . are now cloath'd in Callicoe or Printed Linen; mov'd to it as well for the Cheapness as the Lightness of the Cloth, and the Gaiety of the Colors; . . . let anyone but cast their Eyes among the Children of the Meaner sort playing in the Streets, or of the

<sup>1</sup> *Surrey Sessions Bundle*, 1719.

<sup>2</sup> *State of the Poor*, 1797, p. 554 (Vol. I).

<sup>3</sup> Swift, *Journal to Stella*, p. 175. Swift remarks, in exasperation at the behavior of Patrick, his servant, that he would dismiss him, had he not ordered him a £4 livery.

<sup>4</sup> *Travels in England in 1748*, p. 52.

<sup>5</sup> Ashton, J., *Social Life in the Reign of Queen Anne*, pp. 107, 248.



better sort at Boarding Schools, and in our Families; the Truth is too plain to be deny'd."<sup>1</sup>

Acts of Parliament were unable to stop the sudden fashion for wearing calico, despite fines for wearing it. An illustration occurred in the Middlesex records, when one Margery Pritchard appealed against a conviction for wearing calico. The conviction was confirmed, however, and she had to pay £5 to the informer.<sup>2</sup>

Moritz was most favorably impressed by the cleanliness of the poorer people and delighted to walk up the Strand observing them. "I rarely see even a fellow with a wheel-barrow," he remarked, "who has not a shirt on, and that too such an one, as shews it has been washed; nor even a beggar without both a shirt, and shoes and stockings."<sup>3</sup> Saussure observed the "good cloth and linen" of the lower classes and was surprised that even the poorest did not go with naked feet.<sup>4</sup> The relative cleanliness in dress of the English laborer was made possible by the use of cotton.

Along with the growing use of cotton clothes, went a lessening of class distinction in dress. In commenting on the lack of it at the end of the century, Botsford lays it to the cheapening influence of cotton, and mass production.<sup>5</sup> It is true that cheap materials enabled a fashion to be copied by the lower classes more quickly than before, but the tendency to copy the upper classes in dress was marked in London long before that. Cotton simply made the process easier. It was a development called "apeing one's betters" and was most evident among servants.

The servant problem in London deserves a special word, as it was the focus of many complaints of the luxury and insolence of the lower classes. Servants were at a premium in this height of London's commercial expansion, when the newly rich made up a large part of society. They acted, too, as somewhat of a buffer between classes, and were one of the most important forces in

<sup>1</sup> Pamphlets About Calico — *The Just Complaint of the Poor Weavers*, London, 1720.

<sup>2</sup> *Sessions Books*, No. 1026 (October, 1745), p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> Pinkerton, vol. II, p. 499.

<sup>4</sup> *A Foreign View of England*, trans., 1902, p. 113.

<sup>5</sup> *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 89.

acquainting the lower classes with the ideas and habits of those above them. The fact that the servants of the rich were constantly recruited from the laboring classes, and as often sank back into them, made for a large amount of contact between the servants and their less fortunate brethren. It was from the servants that the lower classes derived their notion of what the gentry were like and acquired imitations of their mannerisms and habits of life. The servants were, in fact, one of the chief means of spreading the luxury of the upper classes. In a later discussion of the standards of living this point will be dealt with in more detail. Because of this function of the servant class in London society, as a link between the upper and lower ranks, their state is worth attention.

Comments on the rudeness, extravagance, and insolence of servants were so numerous in the London of this period as to indicate that they were expressions of something more than the ordinary pettishness of the master. The demand for servants was great among the merchants returned from overseas, successful traders at home, and the increasingly prosperous industrial classes, all of whom were seeking to establish themselves in society. Botsford comments upon the economic results of this state of affairs<sup>1</sup> and a contemporary advertisement is such a clear illustration of the point as to be worth quoting in full:

*"To the Public*

"The rude Behaviour and Insolence of Servants of all Kinds is become a general Complaint; for which Insolence the Law has given no other Power of punishing than by turning them away; and this would be often Punishment enough, if the Servant could not easily provide himself with another Place: But here they find no Manner of Difficulty; for many Persons are weak enough to take Servants without any Character; and if this be insisted on, there is an ingenious Method in this Town of obtaining a false Character from one who personated the former Master or Mistress: To obviate all this, an Office is erected in the *Strand*, . . . where the best Servants in every Capacity are to be heard of; and where the Public may be assured that no Servant shall ever be register'd, who cannot produce a real good Character from the last Place in which he or she actually lived; . . . ."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Botsford, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, 1924, pp. 264-267.

<sup>2</sup> This was published on the back of Henry Fielding's *Enquiry into the Late Increase of Robbers*, London, 1751.

This is significant evidence of the fact that the demand for servants was so great as to make it possible for any sort of individual with sufficient courage to show a "false Character," to obtain a position. The advertisement is also interesting as an early example of an attempt to set up an employment bureau or exchange.<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting in this connection to learn a footman's ambition in case he won a £10,000 lottery. According to a person who knew him, one footman planned his life as follows:

"As soon as I have got the 10,000 l. I'll marry *Grace Tours*; but as she has been cross and coy, I'll use her as a Servant. Every Morning she shall get me a Mug of strong Beer, with a Toast, Nutmeg and Sugar: Then will I sleep again till Ten; then I'll have a large Sack Posset. My Dinner shall be upon Table by One, and a good Pudding. I'll have a Stock of Wine and Brandy laid in. In the Afternoon, about five, I'll have Tarts and Jellies, and a Gallon Bowl of Punch. At ten a hot Supper of two dishes: If I'm in Humour, *Grace* shall sit down. Go to Bed about twelve."<sup>2</sup>

This is an eloquent commentary on the life of the London gentleman and the way in which it influenced his servants.

It was in the matter of dress that the results of "apeing one's betters" were most noticeable. The weavers bemoaned that the use of cotton had been started as a fad for the sake of variety by the gentry, and that "the meaner sort of People were first brought to wear them more because they saw them worn by the Gentry, than for any Convenience, or real Liking they had to them at first themselves."<sup>3</sup> Defoe commented with horror on a servant who "threw his Bonnet, which was all the Covering his Brains had ever known in Aberdeenshire (from thence he came) and bought himself a good Castor English Hat."<sup>4</sup> He related as well the story of a chambermaid who had finer silks than her mistress and was frequently mistaken for her.<sup>5</sup> It was a frequent observation. Grosley commented on the difficulty of telling the

<sup>1</sup> See Mrs. George, p. 293 on, for further examples of this. It was quite customary for certain alehouses to be used in this capacity in many trades.

<sup>2</sup> Published in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. I, 1731, p. 465.

<sup>3</sup> Pamphlets about Calicoe, *Op. cit.*, pp. 24, 25.

<sup>4</sup> *The Great Law of Subordination*, p. 193.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 284.

mistress from the maid.<sup>1</sup> Moritz remarked that "the poorest maid servant, is careful to be in the fashion" and that class distinctions were much less evident than in Germany.<sup>2</sup> Swift's Patrick is an excellent example of the fever for dress which took hold of servants, when he ordered himself a lace hat without his master's consent and brought it home with pride.<sup>3</sup>

By swaggering around in imitation of their masters in taverns and places of amusement, these servants, often only lately risen from the ranks of the laborers, communicated to them the fever for dress. And thus the fashions spread from rank to rank, with increasing rapidity as industrial changes mixed the classes and produced cheaper materials. The development of the cotton industry enabled the demand for cotton to be satisfied and even increased. And the use of cotton materials facilitated the spread of fashion in dress throughout all the classes of society. The laborer could indulge in a variety in dress which he had not known previously.

The analysis of the foregoing facts leads to several conclusions. As far as the statistical data are concerned, the relation between the price of wheat and wages, which we have roughly used to estimate the amount which had to be spent upon the laborer's chief article of food, affords no basis for a pessimistic view of conditions. Judging by the charts alone, one would conclude that there was a distinct increase in standard of living from 1710 to 1736, which was not challenged until the price rise of the nineties. It is precisely during the period of increasing wages and decreasing prices that we find most contemporary complaint of an orgy of gin-drinking, of gaming, of attendance at interludes and froills, and of increase in the use of sugar and tea and calico by all classes. The wide participation in these activities by the poorest members of the London community can be partly explained by the wage and price figures. Since the family bread cost less, at a time when wages were rising, there was obviously more surplus to spend, and we have seen how it was spent. The popular fever for ex-

<sup>1</sup> *Tour to London*, vol. I, pp. 24, 25.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 546.

<sup>3</sup> *Journal to Stella*, p. 191.



citement went further, however, and not only surplus income, but that which should have gone for necessities, was squandered at the tavern or the play. For the first half of the century then, we may conclude that the income available for expenditure on luxuries increased, and in that sense, the standard of living rose. But it may be questioned whether the veritable epidemic of gin-drinking, in so far as it substituted gin for the necessities of life did not really threaten the standard of living. Without setting up a moral criterion of standards of living, it may be hazarded that a real increase in the standard of life of a group can only be attained after the necessities of physical existence have been attended to.

The latter part of the century — up to the early nineties — presents more stable conditions. Wages and prices were steady, the futile prosecution of interlude players, gin shops, and wearers of calico decreased, either because the most flagrant breaches of the law had ceased or the institutions had become gradually accepted. Both things probably occurred. The moral reform led by Wilberforce, allied to the religious revivals of Wesley, must have had some influence. Mr. Griffiths and Miss Buer have shown how the death rate began to fall, with the increase in medical science, and the improvement in sanitary conditions. The use of wheaten bread which the beginning of the century saw started, was firmly entrenched; tea and sugar were also established permanently in the laborer's budget. It seems as if the years after 1750 give more evidence of a permanent increase in the laboring standard of life than the years before. The favorable proportion between wages and wheat prices at the early date, however, was doubtless an important factor in the later improvement.

Without undue optimism, therefore, we may conclude that the standard of living of the London laborer, and even more surely that of the journeyman, improved during the eighteenth century. The improvement, however, does not seem to have been proportionately greater than that of other classes in the community. Much of the increase in eighteenth century standards of

living was due simply to the fact that the standard of life of society in general was being raised by progress in science and industry. As far as the London laborer is concerned, one can only say with certainty that he held his own, and received a share of the increase in comfort and luxury.



## CHAPTER II

### LONDON AS A METROPOLITAN AREA

THE idea of a metropolitan area comprising an urban centre with close economic interrelation between the city and its surrounding districts was early formulated by the German economist, Von Thünen. He observed that the numerical extent of the relation of any one factor varied inversely with the distance from the centre, and himself applied the principle to freight rates. Professor Gras used the analogy in his study of early corn prices in England, showing that the prices of corn were roughly in inverse proportion to the distance from London.<sup>1</sup> In his analysis of labor migration in the north, Professor Redford found that it was also true of wages in the vicinity of the industrial centres in that part of the country, during the early nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup>

Arthur Young's travels in the south of England gave him the same notion and he spent a good deal of time upon his wage and price figures, in attempting to estimate the influence of the capital. The result, as far as wages were concerned, was the following table:

	Average Weekly Wages <sup>3</sup>
Twenty miles around London	10s.9d.
From 20 to 60	7s.8d.
From 60 to 110	6s.4d.
From 110 to 170	6s.3d.

The significance of the table he explained as follows:

"... the influence of the capital, in raising the price of labour, is prodigious; the difference between the extremes, being no less than 4s.6d. or

<sup>1</sup> Gras, N. S. B., *The Evolution of the English Corn Market*, Cambridge (Mass.), 1915. In chapter IV, Gras gives a history of the concept of a metropolitan market, referring especially to Von Thünen's contribution in *Der Isolierte Staat* . . . (see pp. 95-98). Gras himself applied the concept to grain prices in sixteenth and seventeenth century England.

<sup>2</sup> *Labour Migration in England*, London, 1927, pp. 59, 60.

<sup>3</sup> *A Six Weeks Tour through the Southern Counties* . . . , 1772 (2d edition), pp. 333-335. In deriving average weekly agricultural wages, Young reckoned winter as 26 weeks, spring as 21 weeks, and harvest as 5 weeks. Gras quotes the similar price table in *Op. cit.*, p. 99.

near three-fourths of the lowest country price. Nor can the least reason be given for this. At *London* the bread is eat as cheap as any where, and meat only 1d. per lb. dearer than the cheapest part of the country; the price of provisions, therefore, has nothing to do with labour. The vast populousness of *London* and its neighborhood, ought to lower the price of labour; and did not the debauched life of its inhabitants occasion them to be more idle than in the country, it would have that effect: . . ."<sup>1</sup>

The table is a clear illustration of the influence of the metropolis upon wages. Arthur Young's explanations, however, are not as clear. His remarks upon the price of provisions were occasioned by the fact that in a similar analysis of prices, he had found that the prices of staple goods such as bread and meat were the same in the country as in the city. Other articles such as butter, however, did vary with distance, being considerably cheaper in the country. Curiously enough, although the price of bread varied little, that of wheat did. It was perhaps due to the still continuing use of the assize of bread by the justices. We shall find, however, in comparing the wheat prices used in this study, that regional variation was not great, except in certain years when a bad or good harvest struck a particular district with especial force.

Young's statement that there was no reason for the higher wages in London is hardly correct. Certainly as far as the building trades were concerned, the London laborers and craftsmen possessed a distinctly higher grade of skill than those in country towns. It was also true that the demand for labor of this sort was unusually great in the city. Its continual expansion necessitated a large number of workers in the building trades. The higher standard of living of the London workers must also be considered. We have seen that the laborer in London had a varied diet including many other articles than bread, and even according to Young's figures, these things were higher priced in London. The laborer also was constantly incorporating additional luxuries into his diet and his manner of living. A growing standard of living thus made the London laborer desire higher wages, and the growing demand for labor made it possible for

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 336-337.

him to procure them. Probably Young indirectly recognized the growth in standard of living by his comments upon the idleness and debauchery of the city worker. To him, debauchery was an inclusive term, frequently meaning any additions to the comforts of lower class life, such as tea, or sugar.

Young's figures apply primarily to agricultural wages. The agriculture carried on just outside London was devoted to providing dairy products for the populace, hay for the horses and the like. With the constant increase in the population of London, high wages were essential to induce sufficient laborers to supply the demand for produce.

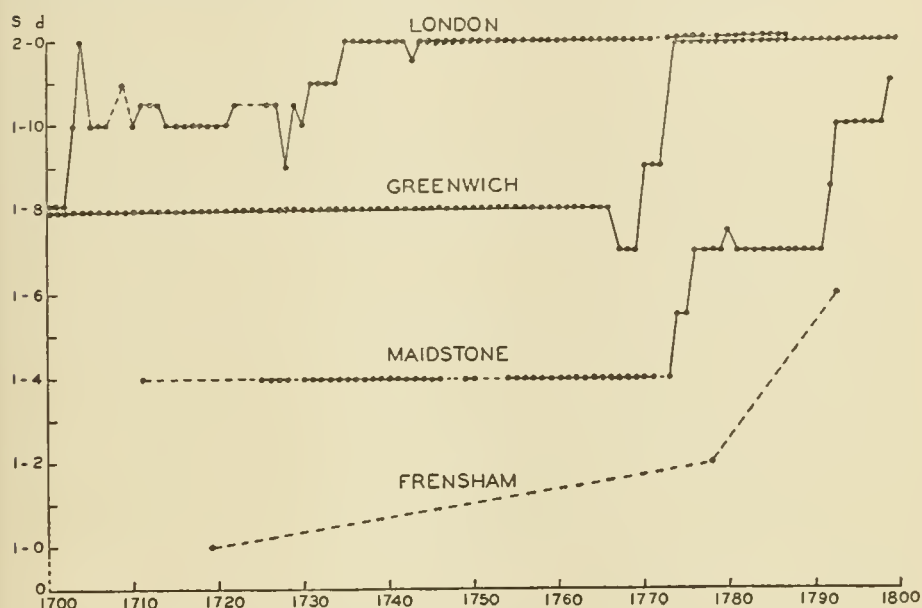


CHART 5—LABORERS' WAGES IN METROPOLITAN LONDON

We have seen that higher wages are to be expected in the London building trades. The variation of wages according to the distance from London exemplifies Von Thünen's law and indicates the sphere of London influence. The accompanying chart (chart 5) shows the daily wages of laborers in the building trades in London and various districts in Middlesex, Kent, and Surrey. Two points are apparent at once.

1. The geographical grouping of the series. The Greenwich,

Dartford, Kingston, and Chertsey figures keep more or less upon the same level with some difference in timing. The same is true of the Maidstone and Guildford wages. Below them all is Frensham, which is the greatest distance from London, on the border between Surrey and Hampshire.

2. The fact that the difference between the wages in the diverse districts tends to decrease towards the end of the century. The Greenwich, Dartford, and Kingston wages move up to the London level. The Maidstone and Guildford figures increase in slightly greater proportion, and the Frensham wages, if the very scattered items are at all representative, approach the Guildford rate. This illustrates the increasingly greater ease of communication with London and the correspondingly greater mobility of labor.

The geographical situation is more clearly seen in the map of Surrey and Kent showing the position of the country districts in relation to London.<sup>1</sup> Roughly speaking, a circle drawn with twenty miles as a radius, and London as a centre, shows a wage which ranged from 1s.8d. to 2s.2d. to 1790. Within a second circle, of about twenty to forty miles radius, wages varied from 1s.4d. to 1s.8d. And in Frensham, which is beyond this limit, wages went from 1s. to 1s.6d. in fifty years. There are occasional exceptions, but these groups are approximately correct. When they are taken with the previous analysis of Young, it seems clear that wages in the immediate vicinity varied with their distance from the city.

Not only in wages, but in other economic matters as well, was the influence of London significant. It was the centre of the expanding commercial life of the country. Miss Buer stated this fact in vigorous terms:

"This great city, containing one-tenth of the population of the country and a considerably greater proportion of its wealth, had to be fed and provided with the fuel and raw materials necessary for its industry. The repercussion of the necessary organization upon the economic life of the country immediately surrounding London was subordinate to it."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See map at the beginning of Part I.

<sup>2</sup> Buer, Mabel C., *Health, Wealth, and Population in Early Days of Industrial Revolution*, 1926, p. 51.



Henry Fielding observed the permeation of London amusements into regions near London and desired the process checked—"Nor should such a Fashion be allowed to spread into every Village round *London*, and by degrees all over the Kingdom: by which means, not only Idleness, but all Kinds of Immorality, will be encouraged."<sup>1</sup> Another writer complained of the influence of London tradesmen who evidently retired to the country districts to enjoy rural comforts in their declining years. He said —

"Another evil is that London tradesmen, when they become farmers, bringing down their families and connections, introduce expensive luxuries before unknown in the country, and consequently destroy the ancient simplicity of the farmer's life."<sup>2</sup>

The countrymen evidently had it both ways; from their fellows who went to London, and from Londoners who migrated to the country, having obtained some competence in trade. They could not escape the influence of London if they would.

The spread of the manners and customs of the metropolis was facilitated by the increased care of the roads. Lecky, who gives a very good description of the increased contact between town and country, and the profound effect of London ways upon the life of the country gentry and the lower classes, attributed it almost entirely to improvement in transportation.<sup>3</sup> A contemporary, William Young, listed "the facility of communication with the capital" as one of the leading factors in "effecting a Revolution in our System of Labour and Industry."<sup>4</sup> Evidence from the sessions records would indicate that the improvement of roads was as much a result as a cause of the increasing economic necessity for contact between the country and urban districts. With the improvement in agricultural methods, and in industrial processes, it became necessary for producers in all parts of England to find a market for their increased output. London, be-

<sup>1</sup> *Enquiry into . . . Late Increase of Robbers*, 1751, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *A Political Enquiry into the Consequences of Enclosing Waste Lands*, London, 1785, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, 3rd edition, London, 1883, vol. VI, pp. 167-180.

<sup>4</sup> *Observations Preliminary to a Proposed Amendment of the Poor Laws*, London, 1788, p. 17.

sides utilizing a large proportion for her own consumption, was the economic clearing house for the remainder.

Consequently we find country towns petitioning the Quarter Sessions Court for a "rate" to assist them in repairing the main highways, so that the commercial traffic might not be impeded. For example, a petition to the Surrey Sessions included the following "Complaint . . . by Severall of the inhabitants of the Borough of Reigate that their Oatmeal trade is greatly decayed and their market allmost quite lost which is in great measure owing to the neglect of the surveyors not doing their duty at proper times and in proper places on the Roads leading to this towne . . .".<sup>1</sup> And, in 1716, a committee of justices who investigated the petition of the freeholders for aid in repairing Somerset Bridge, recommended that the county make repairs at once or build a new bridge "for that the want thereof is very prejudicial to that part of the County from whence very great quantityes of Chalke and other goods are daily carryed into other parts of this County, as well as into remote Countyes . . .".<sup>2</sup>

The towns which were merely way stations on the new commercial routes had a very difficult time, for parishes were generally expected to repair their own highways, and many of them found their roads ruined far beyond their financial ability to repair them by the passage of heavy wagons. Then they turned to the county for assistance, with varying success. Godalming petitioned twice for a rate, in 1709 and again in 1717, because "our Towne is now so ruinous and out of repair by reason of the Daily passing and repassing of Coaches waggons tymber Carts and other Carriages and being the maine Road Leading to Portsmouth and Backwards and forwards from thence and other great places . . .".<sup>3</sup> The sessions records of all the counties are full of similar petitions. The Webbs give many examples in their study of the development of the roads.<sup>4</sup>

We may say, then, that London may be regarded as the centre

<sup>1</sup> *Surrey Sessions Bundles*, 1718.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1716.

<sup>3</sup> *Surrey Sessions Bundles*, 1709 and 1717.

<sup>4</sup> *The Story of the King's Highway*, London, 1920. See the chapters on the eighteenth century.



of economic waves which were constantly rippling outward, losing in intensity what they gained in distance. The development of roads and other means of contact, undoubtedly, facilitated the interchange of London economic and social habits.

## WAGES AND PRICES COMPARED

### GREENWICH, DARTFORD, CHERTSEY, AND KINGSTON

Within the first circle of London influence, the Greenwich Hospital figures are the most continuous. (See Chart 6) The wages of the laborers were very stable. The general laborer received, as in the case of Westminster, 1s.8d. per day practically without change during the whole period. The median wage of the bricklayer's, plumber's, and mason's labor did not increase from the customary rate of 1s.8d. until 1770, when it went to 1s.9d. and 2s. in four years. The wages of the laborer who is listed in the household accounts<sup>1</sup> followed this trend, except that in the first forty years the rate was 1s.6d. The sudden drops in the rates of the individual series are very noticeable; for example, in the bricklayer's labor in 1750, the late sixties and early seventies; in the mason's labor in 1730 to 1737; in the plumber's labor from 1740 to 1760. The decrease is even more striking in the wages of the journeymen. It is not to be seen in the median series as the movement of the individual series is there somewhat obscured. The bricklayer's wages decreased from 2s.6d. to 2s.4d. from 1775 to 1794; the plumber's wages were alternately 3s. (1700 to 1708), 2s.6d. (1709 to 1717), 3s. again (1719 to 1737), 2s.6d. (1737 to 1762), and 3s. from that date until 1784 when a rise took place to 3s.3d. The masons were the only craftsmen whose wages show a steady upward trend. From 2s.6d., 1700 to 1736, their rate went up to 2s.8d. (1738 to 1761) and, with a slight recession, rose to 2s.10d. in the late sixties and stayed there. The median of the crafts which includes bricklayers, masons, plumbers, carpenters, joiners, and plasterers, indicates very little gain for the crafts during the century. From 1717 to 1732 there was

<sup>1</sup> These wage figures (only of the household books) were lent by Sir William Beveridge.

an unexplained rise from 2s.6d. to 2s.7d. and then to 2s.9d., with a decrease back to 2s.6d. by 1732. Until 1762 the rate was almost steadily 2s.6d. In the sixties a slow rise began, which had attained a height of 2s.10d. by 1788.

Although the range of the Greenwich figures is almost as great as that of the Westminster wages, they have absolutely no relation to the movement of the latter. The individual series from Westminster do not exhibit the periods of decrease which characterize the Greenwich series. Neither the craftsmen nor laborers at Greenwich attained the Westminster level until the end of the period. The differences in the series may perhaps be explained in part by the nature of the contracts for the work at Greenwich. Although all the building trade wages were contractual to some extent<sup>1</sup> the Greenwich wages seem to have been for contracts of longer duration. The statement at the end of each monthly account stated that ". . . the Rates and Prices charged . . . are either according to Contract subsisting, or were if not in Contract the reasonable Current Prices at the times the Particulars were furnished . . .".<sup>2</sup> The amounts paid indicate that a given rate lasted during the time one particular craftsman sent in the bills. When he was changed, the rate changed, too, indicating contracts for fixed wages over a period of time. These wages, then, could hardly be expected to vary with demand or prices, except when a contract changed hands, and a lag is the inevitable result. It is also more questionable in this case whether the laborer received the full amount of his wages. The security of a long contract would give the craftsman more power which the institutional nature of the place would enhance.

In estimating the real wages of this region nearest to London, London prices have been used. The agricultural survey of Middlesex in 1794 states that "Bread, throughout the county of Middlesex, appears to be, in regard to price, the same as regulated by the city magistrates, in proportion to the price of wheat." Meat, too, is the same, and only in dairy and garden produce

<sup>1</sup> See discussion on pp. 16, 17.

<sup>2</sup> *Works Accounts of Greenwich Hospital*, at the Public Record Office, London.

does distance bring any advantage.<sup>1</sup> The differences between the London and Maidstone assizes of wheat were so small throughout the century as to point to the existence of a wide area over which London prices prevailed. We have seen previously that Arthur Young came to the same conclusion in 1768.<sup>2</sup>

The comparison of money wages with the price of wheat shows less evidence of an increase in purchasing power than was apparent in London. (Chart 6) As a whole, the laborer had to spend

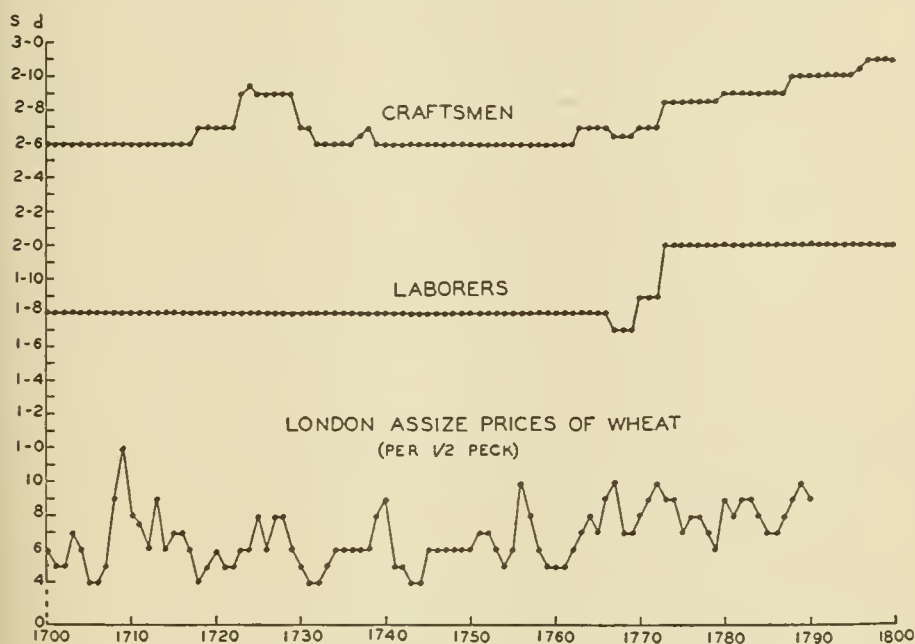


CHART 6—MEDIAN WAGES AT GREENWICH HOSPITAL

about one-third of his daily wages in buying the family bread (assuming as previously that a family of six consumed one-half peck daily) during the entire period. This proportion was nearer one-quarter during the good years of 1720 to 1750, and from 1765 to 1775, it was more nearly one-half. The craftsmen spent about one-fifth of their wages on food until 1750, except for the short period in the twenties, when they spent somewhat less. Wages did not rise sufficiently to keep this proportion in

<sup>1</sup> Foot, P., *General View of the Agriculture . . . of Middlesex*, London, 1794, p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> See discussion on pp. 39-40.

1770, and bread then took up about one-quarter of their wages. The individual crafts fared less well than the median would indicate, for the median is really non-typical in not giving any of the periods of decrease which were especially characteristic of the bricklayers, plumbers and joiners.

There are facts which lend a more optimistic color to the situation. Employment was very regular. The same men were kept on month after month, as the accounts show. Beer and candles were frequently supplied, and it is not improbable that some of the laborers at least were inmates of the hospital. In this case they would receive far better food and lodging than they could secure for the same money in London, even though the Greenwich Hospital dietary showed the usual preponderance of bread and cheese. But there was beef three times a week and variations of milk porridge, hasty pudding and the like.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, the Greenwich laborers may have been somewhat better off than the wage and price comparison by itself would indicate.

The situation of the workers at Dartford, Chertsey and Kingston was less favorable. The chart (7) makes clear the discontinuous nature of the items, making it possible to reach only very tentative conclusions. Disregarding the sudden jump in 1729, which was quite probably due to the importation of London workmen at London prices, the wages of laborers at Dartford were 1s.6d. or 1s.7d. until 1780. During the next ten years the rate went up to 1s.11d., to 2s. and to 2s.2d. A half peck of wheat cost about one-third of the daily wage in 1720 to 1755, and from that time until 1775, nearly one-half. Laborers must have been in particular distress from 1765 to 1775, on account of the bad harvests of 1766 to 1767 and 1772. After that wages rose so that the earlier proportion of one-third between wages and wheat prices was resumed.

The Dartford craftsmen were relatively better off. Wages appear to have fluctuated between 2s. and 2s.6d. until 1750, when 2s.6d. continued until some time in the eighties. In that decade wages rose from 2s.6d. to 2s.10d. Assuming that the 2s.6d. rate

<sup>1</sup> *An Account of Several Workhouses*, London, 1725, p. 32.

may be interpolated in the period 1750 to 1775, real wages increased to some small extent in 1750 to 1760, when one-fifth would pay for the daily wheat ration for the family. During the rest of the time one-fourth of the man's daily wage was needed to secure one-half peck of wheat.

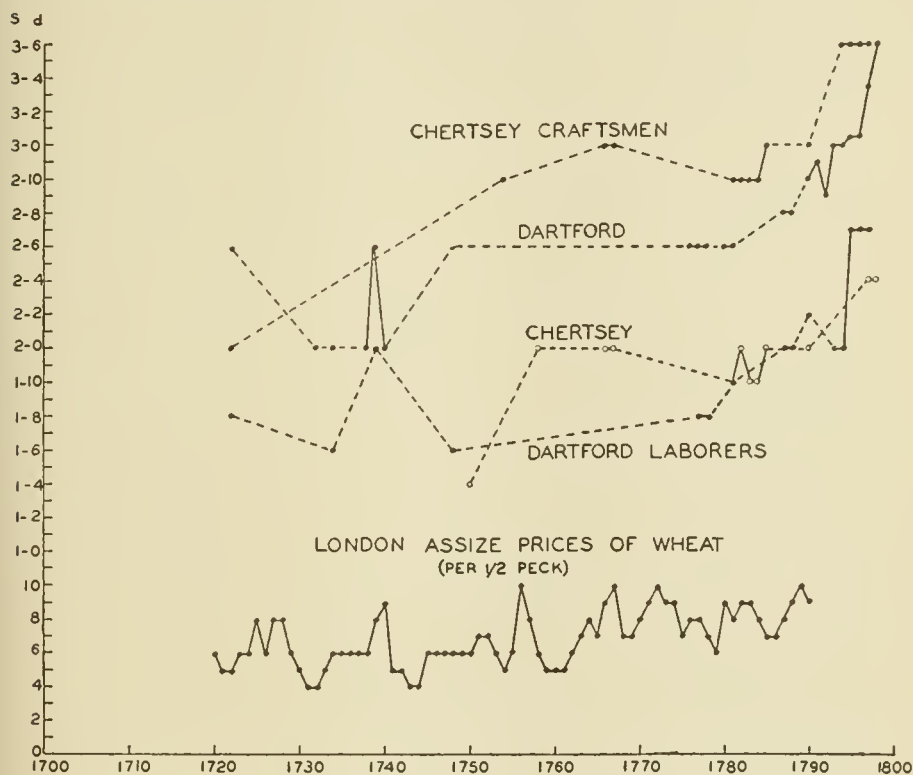


CHART 7—WAGES AND WHEAT PRICES IN CHERTSEY AND DARTFORD

These wages, which are for work on the Dartford House of Correction<sup>1</sup>, were perhaps lower than the rates paid usually to laborers in the coal and shipping industry, for which all such towns along the Thames were noted. Archenholz commented in 1784 and 1785 on the "prodigious number of carpenters and other trades men, who labour incessantly in the construction of ships of every size and shape" on all the towns along the river, and remarked on the extraordinary wages of coalheavers and the

<sup>1</sup> From *Kent Sessions Papers*.



like, who sometimes received 9s. a day.<sup>1</sup> Even if this is the customary traveller's exaggeration, it points to the existence of higher wages than those cited previously.

No figures were discovered for the Chertsey and Kingston laborers before 1750. At that date a bill listed the rate of 1s.4d. per day.<sup>2</sup> If this were at all typical of the previous period, more than one-third of the wage would have had to go for the daily wheat allowance. From 1748 to 1790 intermittent rates quoted 2s. as the only figure, which makes possible some rise in real wages up to 1765. From then on the proportion between wages and wheat was again one-third. Carpenters at Chertsey received 2s. in 1722. There are no further items until 1758, when 2s.8d. was given, and 3s. after 1765. The sudden descent to 2s.2d. in 1782 was probably a qualitative difference. Kingston bricklayers were getting 2s.8d. in 1781 to 1784 and 3s. in 1790. If one assumes that the rates were continuous over the periods for which data are lacking, a slight rise in wages in terms of wheat is discernible.

In general, the laborers of this first area had to meet London conditions of prices with lower wages. They were not in sufficiently rural districts to participate in the advantages of the agricultural situation. Therefore, unless they were connected with a highly paid trade like the shipping or coal trades, they were probably in a worse situation than the London laborer. It is doubtful, too, whether they escaped the evils of excessive gin-drinking, for that spread to the outlying districts from London itself. The wage and price figures of this area do not exhibit as sure a basis for a potential rise in standard of living.

#### RURAL SURREY, KENT, AND MIDDLESEX

The problem of wages in country districts introduces quite new aspects. Kent, Surrey, and Middlesex were never completely free from metropolitan influences, except perhaps on the heaths or downs. They were therefore not rural in the sense in which

<sup>1</sup> *A Picture of England*, trans., London, 1797, pp. 92, 93.

<sup>2</sup> From *Middlesex Books* and *Surrey Sessions Bundles*.



remote places in the north or west might claim to be. The prevalence of the main roads to the coast precluded any such isolation. Nevertheless, life around Maidstone or Guildford was more dominated by agricultural factors than by any other one influence. Of course, to a twentieth century person, even the London of this period would have seemed countrified. Swift mentioned the "hay-making nymphs" in the fields at Chelsea;<sup>1</sup> and open fields were all around the city. But interests, economic or other wise, were in no sense rural.

William Marshall gives the best description of agricultural conditions in Kent and Surrey. In what he called the "Vale of London" (Middlesex and part of Surrey) the size of farms was generally small; 200 or 300 acres being considered large. Near London there were three or more large cow farms.<sup>2</sup> There were, as late as 1798 when Marshall was writing, a good many unenclosed and uncultivated wastes and common field even about London, which he considered a disgraceful state of affairs.<sup>3</sup> The Surrey heaths were very bare and could hardly support the few scraggly cattle which wandered upon them. In 1768 Young had observed the fertile land about Farnham which was devoted to the cultivation of hops, and commented on the stretch of bad land between that place and Guildford.<sup>4</sup>

Kent presented a neater agricultural picture. In the district of which Maidstone was the centre farms were small. The region was entirely enclosed, as, indeed, all Kent (except the Isle of Thanet) had been from early times. The land was very fertile and the main crops were hops and fruit, with a good deal of wheat, barley, oats, and beans besides.<sup>5</sup> Defoe described Maidstone as "eminent for the Plenty of Provisions, and richness of Lands in the Country all round it, and for the best Market in the Country."<sup>6</sup> This district, with the eastern chalk hills, which

<sup>1</sup> *Journal to Stella*, p. 170 (Everyman edition).

<sup>2</sup> *Minutes on Agriculture in the Southern Counties*, London, 1799, vol. I, p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. I, pp. 12, 13.

<sup>4</sup> *A Six Weeks Tour through the Southern Counties*, London, 1772. (Second edition), pp. 209-11.

<sup>5</sup> Marshall, *The Rural Economy of the Southern Counties*, vol. I.

<sup>6</sup> *A Tour . . . through Great Britain*, London, 1724, vol. I. p. 34.

include part of Surrey, was the main agricultural area of Kent. The weald was wild like the Surrey heaths, and Romney Marsh was only suited for grazing sheep.

The wages of agricultural labor are given for scattered years in the accounts of Young, Marshall, and in the agricultural surveys. Those available are summarized in the following table:

1768					
Surrey <sup>1</sup>	all year	Harvest	Winter	Spring	Summer
Farnham	1s., beer	4os., beer, victuals for month			
Guildford			1s.2d.	1s.4d.	
Cobham		2s., 2s.6d. beer	1s.4d.	2s.	
Clapham			1s.6d.		1s.8d., 2s.
1790-1792					
Kent					
District of		2s., beer	1s.4d.-	1s.6d.,	1s.6d.,
Maidstone <sup>2</sup>		and ale	1s.6d.	beer	beer, ale
Chatham <sup>3</sup>			1s.6d.		2s.
Ashford		2s.6d.	1s.6d.		1s.10d.
Sandwich <sup>3</sup>		2s.6d. board	1s.6d.		1s.8d.
1793					
Isle of	2s.				
Shepey <sup>4</sup>					
Weald <sup>5</sup>	1s.4d.- 1s.6d.				
West Kent <sup>6</sup>	1s.6d.- 1s.8d.				
Isle of	1s.6d.-				
Thanet <sup>7</sup>	1s.8d.				

An ordinary laborer, working in the hop fields between Maidstone and Canterbury received 1s.6d. per day in 1792, whereas a dryer earned a guinea a week, plus a quart of strong beer each day.<sup>8</sup> During the hop harvest laborers from Wales and Ireland

<sup>1</sup> Young, *op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> Marshall, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 331-334.

<sup>3</sup> Young, *Tour to Essex, Kent, and Sussex*, in vol. XX of *Annals of Agriculture*.

<sup>4</sup> Boys, J., *General View of Agriculture of Kent*, 1794, p. 71.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 96.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 85, 86.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 24, 25.

<sup>8</sup> Boys, J., *op. cit.*, p. 59.

streamed into Kent to do the season's picking. To this ready supply of casual labor Kalm attributed the lack of permanent farm servants in the south of England.<sup>1</sup> Kalm also observed the wages of men at a lime kiln near Gravesend to be 9s. or 10s. a week in 1748.<sup>2</sup>

In Middlesex, general husbandry laborers were getting 1s. 6d. and 1s.8d. a day in 1793. Women were here employed for making hay, weeding, and gathering garden produce. Their wages were about one-half of the men's and they claimed the privilege of gathering green and ripe fruit by established measure.<sup>3</sup> Foot cited many piece rates by which much higher wages were earned. At haying, for instance, a good man could earn about 3s.4d. a day.<sup>4</sup>

These wages apply only to the end of our period. The sole data available for comparison earlier in the century are the assessed wages of 1724 and 1732 in Kent. It is dubious whether the assessed wages were actually paid, as there is some evidence to show, at least in the building trades, that current rates were higher.<sup>5</sup> Probably in agriculture, however, there would be a closer correspondence, owing to a slower rate of change than in the trades. The assessed wages were as follows:

	Summer	Winter
1724 <sup>6</sup>	1s.2d.	10d.
1732 <sup>7</sup>	1s.2d.	1s.

The 1790 wages given above show only a slight increase over these figures and even less if we judge the assessed rates to underestimate actual conditions in any way.

Perquisites must be considered, however, in the discussion of agricultural wages. Beer, bread, special opportunities to buy meat or grain, fuel rights, and sometimes rent were given to the

<sup>1</sup> Kalm, *op. cit.*, pp. 82, 83.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 438.

<sup>3</sup> Foot, *op. cit.*, pp. 28, 29.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>5</sup> See discussion in the author's article in *English Historical Review*, July, 1928.

<sup>6</sup> 1724 assessment for Kent quoted in above article.

<sup>7</sup> 1732 assessment for Kent quoted in above article originally from *Gentleman's Magazine*.

laborer in addition to his money wages. Wages were always increased at harvest time, rising to about 3s. per day for the all year round worker, but migratory harvesters usually worked by the month or received a lump sum.<sup>1</sup> Women were not generally employed at harvest, despite occasional reference to the contrary. Marshall advised against it but in case a scarcity of men should make it necessary, he estimated very cold-bloodedly the proportion of women to men in a working team which would give the greatest emotional stimulus compatible with work.<sup>2</sup> Kalm was surprised that women were not more frequently employed in the field with men.<sup>3</sup> As there was very little home manufacturing of any sort in these counties, the surplus income from women's labor could not have been great.

It is difficult to tell how many of these perquisites accompanied money wages at any one place and the best that can be done is to list them, so that money wages in general may be regarded with some scepticism. Hours of labor were generally twelve in summer and ten in winter, each day.<sup>4</sup>

An interesting example of the rooted existence of perquisites occurred among the cases before the Surrey Sessions in 1737. One George Bradley was apprehended for "being concerned as Principal in a Tumultuous & unlawful assembly of above fforty men . . ." He explained that this was a meeting of "Hop ground Men . . . to Consider whether they Shou'd Agree with their Masters to take five Shillings In Lieu of Some Perquisites they (the workmen) Claim'd to have out of the Hopp grounds or Insist to have Ten Shillings for the same . . ." <sup>5</sup> Probably the hop owners were attempting to do away with these perquisites by commuting them into money.

With some notion of the agricultural situation in mind we may now discuss the wages in the building trades with more accuracy. Besides the more or less continuous series charted on

<sup>1</sup> Marshall, *Minutes . . . in Southern Counties*, pp. 351-354.

<sup>2</sup> Marshall, *Ibid.*, p. 352.

<sup>3</sup> Kalm, *op. cit.*, p. 333.

<sup>4</sup> Foot, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

<sup>5</sup> The Examination of George Bradley of Farnham in 1737 *Bundle*.

this page (chart 8) there are some isolated wage figures which should be mentioned. The general laborer in Maidstone received 1s.6d. per day all through the century. The same rate was given to the laborers who repaired the road through Dunkirk in 1778, 1784, and 1790.<sup>1</sup> Plumbers at Maidstone received 1s.10d.-2s. per day up to 1780 and then a continuous rate of

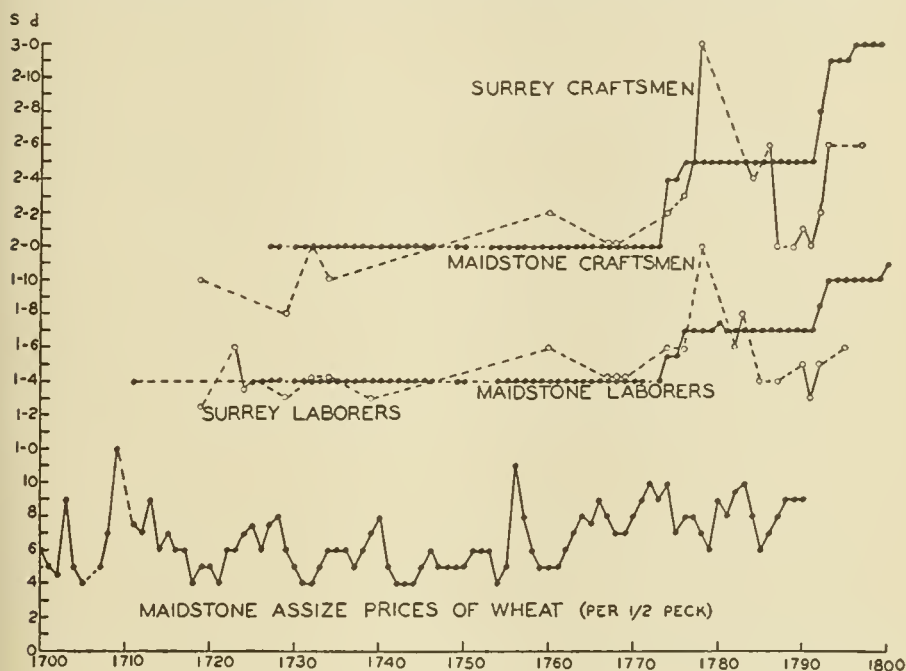


CHART 8—WAGES AND WHEAT PRICES IN KENT AND SURREY

2s.6d. up to 1794. At Cheam, in Surrey, a “poor honest Man” is described as working for a shilling a day.<sup>2</sup> All the rest of the Surrey figures, with the exception of Frensham, are incorporated in the Guildford average. They include work done on bridges and roads in the vicinity of Guildford and Dorking, which lie in the same district as Maidstone.

Wages in Maidstone were practically unchanged until 1773 and then a slight increase occurred. Compared with the Maidstone wheat prices, the result is not cheerful. These prices show a greater intensity of fluctuation than those of London, though

<sup>1</sup> *Kent Sessions Papers, Bundles of 1778, 1784, 1790.*

<sup>2</sup> *Surrey Sessions Bundles, letter to Mr. Corbett in 1730 Bundle.*



the decennial averages of both series are very nearly alike.<sup>1</sup> This fact probably caused more acute distress in specific years than in the capital. Except for the years 1730 to 1750, when the proportion between wages and wheat was about thirty per cent, the daily half peck took up forty per cent of the laborer's wage. After 1750, the laborers had to spend slightly more than forty per cent of their wage for bread. The craftsmen, as usual, found themselves in a better position. They need spend only one-fourth and one-fifth of their wage on wheat during the same periods, except that the rise of the seventies only enabled them to continue the original proportion of one-fourth and did not improve their situation. Wages in terms of wheat, therefore, just about held their own during the century, and that was all.

The wages alone, however, do not tell the full tale of the laborer's earnings. The advantages of an agricultural district lay in the fact that the laborer in trades of various sorts could supplement his wages by harvest work in the summer—a considerable addition to the annual income. In this district the laborer who worked on the roads in the winter very probably spent the hay and harvest periods on a farm, or picked hops in the season. Beer, too, was regularly given to laborers of all sorts, and Marshall stated that 2d. a day was usually given to agricultural workers, if beer was not. He calculated that the beer was cheaper—probably the reason why it was so frequently given.<sup>2</sup> In this highly enclosed district common rights were of no general concern (although for the heath areas the sessions records are full of petitions to build cottages on the waste) and it is doubtful if the laborer's cottage was surrounded by much garden land.

It is to be surmised, however, that conditions were better than the wage and price chart suggests. During the distress of the bad

<sup>1</sup> Maidstone, decennial averages per  $\frac{1}{2}$  peck:

1700-1709	6d.	1740-1749	5d.
1710-1719	6d.	1750-1759	6d.
1720-1729	6d.	1760-1769	7d.
1730-1739	5d.	1770-1779	8d.
		1780-1789	8d.

Cf. with London figures, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Marshall, *op. cit.*, pp. 203, 204, (vol. I).

harvests after 1795, Mr. Boys remarked that "the poor are certainly not so much distressed in this country as might be expected, because the farmers in general either allow them wheat for their families and corn to fatten their hogs at a low rate, or an increase of wages; and some parishes sell wheat meal to their own parishioners only at eight shillings per bushel, charging the loss to the poor's rate; . . ." <sup>1</sup> One might infer that in years of similar distress earlier in the century the same sort of paternalism was indulged in.

We have seen in the case of London how large a part of the lower class diet consisted of wheat bread, made palatable by cheese and washed down by beer. It was stated too that this situation prevailed in all the southern counties. Kent, Surrey, and Middlesex were included in Charles Smith's first group. There is verification of this in a statement made by a committee of Surrey justices who had been appointed to look into the matter of bread supplied to the county prison. Their report ended with the following statement: "Therefore we are of opinion that as Corn is Cheap one pennyworth will be Sufficient allowance to each prisoner and that it be of the Second Sort called Wheaten Bread there being very little (if any) Brown Bread made in these parts . . ." <sup>2</sup> The above letter of Mr. Boys confirms the use of wheat in Kent, and in response to Young's enquiries, it was stated of Betshanger, that no substitute for wheaten bread was used in 1795. <sup>3</sup>

The workhouse at Stroud, Kent, could boast of no superiority in diet to the others described above, but for some reason the children were expected to eat "Hard Bisket" when the "old People" had bread and cheese. <sup>4</sup> The proportions between the amount of bread and meat given in a poorhouse "in a Parish of Kent near a Considerable City, 1773" is enlightening. Each person was given daily one-half as many ounces of bread, as of meat per week. In other respects the institution was fairly liberal,

<sup>1</sup> A letter by J. Boys in vol. 35 of the *Annals of Agriculture*. Another letter in this volume by Francis Rockliffe of West Ashby stated that the same was true there.

<sup>2</sup> *Surrey Sessions Bundles* 1741 Bundle.

<sup>3</sup> *Annals of Agriculture* vol. 24 1795.

<sup>4</sup> *An Account of Several Workhouses* London 1725 p. 47.

for it provided milk, beer, and onions, along with the staples of life, and even wine for the sick.<sup>1</sup>

Most interesting of all are some actual budgets quoted by David Davies.<sup>2</sup> The numbers in parentheses denote the size of the family. The earnings and expenses of six families in Sidlesham Parish, Surrey, in 1793 are stated as follows:

<i>Weekly Expenses</i>	I (6)	II (6)	III (6)	IV (6)	V (5)	VI (6)
Bread and Flour	4s.	4s.2d.	4s.3d.	3s.11d.	3s.9d.	4s.9d.
Yeast and Salt	½d.	½d.	½d.	½d.	1d.	½d.
Bacon and other meat	2s.	1s.9d.	1s.10d.	2s.3d.	2s.1d.	3s.
Tea and Sugar	7d.	1s.2d.	7d.	7d.	7½d.	8d.
Butter	9d.	6d.	9d.	9d.	8½d.	9d.
Cheese	1s.	6d.	1s.3d.	1s.	1s.2d.	11d.
Soap Starch Blue	2d.	1d.	1½d.	1½d.	1d.	1½d.
Candles	2½d.	2½d.	1½d.	2½d.	2d.	1½d.
Thread Worsted etc.	1d.	½d.	½d.	½d.	½d.	1d.
Total	8-10	8-5½	9-0	8-11	8-8½	10-5½
Amount per annum	£22-19-4	21-19-10	23-8-0	23-3-8	22-12-10	27-3-10
Rent and Fuel	£3-13-6	2-0-0	1-15-0	7-6-0	4-1-0	6-3-6
Total annual expenses	£26-12-10	23-19-10	25-3-0	30-9-8	26-13-10	33-7-4
Weekly Earnings	10-0	12-0	11-0	11-6	11-0	12-0
Total Annual Earnings	£26-0-0	31-4-0	28-12-0	29-18-0	28-12-0	31-4-0
	12-10 (deficit)	7-4-2 (surplus)	3-9-0 (surplus)	11-8 (deficit)	1-18-2 (surplus)	2-3-4 (deficit)

The fact that families Nos. I and II took in lodgers did not prevent a deficit. No. V, a sheep-shearer, was really earning more than 11s. a week. The surplus of family No. III was materially aided by having to pay no rent.

The two families with the same and the highest annual income show a radically different expenditure. No. II came out with a surplus and No. VI with a deficit. Perhaps half the surplus of the first family resulted from having to pay nothing for fuel. Even with that, the difference is striking. No. VI paid more for rent, meat, butter, cheese and bread. No. II spent more than was customary for tea and sugar. Quite evidently the general standard of living of No. VI was on a higher plane than that of No. II, despite the comparatively large amount spent by the latter family on tea and sugar. And it is interesting to observe that a

<sup>1</sup> *Account of a Poor House* . . . in vol. 23 of the *Annals of Agriculture*.

<sup>2</sup> *Case of the Labourers in Husbandry*, Bath, 1795, Appendix, pp. 180, 181.

proportionately greater expenditure on meat, butter and cheese was characteristic of the families with a deficit. The amount spent for meat weekly ranged from one-half to two-thirds of that spent for bread, a goodly proportion. This may be due to the increased use of meat at the end of the century, or again, merely to the peculiarities of this particular group of families. It is certainly not safe to generalize from these six families, both because of the small size of the sample, and because these budgets apply to 1793. Later conditions cannot be read back too glibly into the early part of the century. The proportion spent on meat was probably not at all characteristic of the general situation in the first part of the century. The budgets are of interest in themselves, however, as actual examples of working class diet and expenditure.

The only warrantable conclusion to be drawn from the above comparison of wages and wheat prices, and the analysis of diet, is that wages in terms of wheat managed to hold their own, if not to advance during the century. The greater number of perquisites, however, and the opportunity to combine harvest and hop ground work with that of general labor and work in the trades makes the possible margin between wages and prices somewhat wider. Quite probably, too, the general variety of diet was greater than that of the city laborer. Conditions of work and living were much more stable than in London, and the average laborer, if he had less chance for extraordinary gains, and the incorporation of luxury articles into his diet, was more assured of his regular meals. In times of distress, too, country landlords felt some responsibility for the lower classes around them. There was no one to take any such care of the laborer in London; if he had the opportunity for greater success, he had also the chance of greater failure.

#### OTHER EVIDENCE OF LOWER CLASS LIVING CONDITIONS

Although the charts of wages and prices give us a more concrete measure of basic elements of the laborer's existence than is possible in any other way, yet they present but a skeleton of his actual standard of living. Because contemporary travelers



and social historians in general have been more interested in the spectacular life of the upper classes, little has been known of the everyday living conditions of the ordinary laborer in the eighteenth century. From the Quarter Sessions records, however, it is possible to piece together many more facts concerning the life of the lower classes, at least in the three counties now under discussion.

Judging from the number of "informations" against people who stole household goods and clothes, petty thieving must have been used constantly as a supplement to more conventional ways of earning a living. Generally the things stolen were clothes which could, of course, be easily pawned. From the information in the *Surrey* and *Kent Sessions Bundles*,<sup>1</sup> one finds that waistcoats, coats, and silk handkerchiefs were among the favorite articles taken from the houses of laborers. Linen of all sorts, and among women's clothes, red cloaks, silk and calico gowns, and head gear were most popular. Stockings, both wool and silk, shirts, buckskin breeches, mourning rings, and cloth by the yard were all carried off with equal impartiality from the houses of laborers.

It would take up too much space to quote in detail from the informations as a whole, but there are a few which merit such attention. Richard Thorpe, a husbandman of Maidstone, came home one July day in 1711 to find missing not only "A great Coat a Close body'd Coat & Waistcoat A pair of Breeches & a Hat" but his wife as well. He informed the court that the same person had carried off all the items and seemed as concerned about the clothes as his wife. In the course of the proceedings it came out that a tailor had valued the great coat at 12s.<sup>2</sup>

In 1764, Hannah Hughes, a laborer's wife of Streatham, reported that "one Purple Printed Cotton Gown and one old Silk Handkerchief" had been stolen from the hedge where they were hanging to dry.<sup>3</sup> It was in 1772 that Joseph Legg, a farmer's

<sup>1</sup> These informations occur in nearly every bundle from 1700 to 1800, but are especially frequent after 1750.

<sup>2</sup> *Kent Sessions Papers*, 1711 bundle.

<sup>3</sup> *Surrey Sessions Bundles*, 1764 bundle.



servant missed out of his box a "Hat, Silk Handkerchief, a linnen one, a Coat, a Fustian Frock, a Waistcoat, a pair of Stockings and a Shirt."<sup>1</sup> It is an interesting commentary on the living conditions of servants that this box was kept in a chamber "wher Seven fellow Servants Slept."

Joseph Ansty of Deptford must have been a prosperous laborer for he lost articles of clothing valued at five pounds out of his house in 1772. Among the items were the customary men's clothes—breeches, shirts, etc., a good many women's clothes including both a silk and linen gown, seven pair of silk stockings, a silver tablespoon, and gold and silver lace.<sup>2</sup> A curious combination of things was left as security by John Bremen of Greenwich, a Bricklayer's laborer: "4 Pds of Beef 2 Books 2 Waistcoats one Pair of Worsted Stockings and one Pair of Trousers."<sup>3</sup>

Another laborer, Andrew Clark of New Brentford, ran away and left three children chargeable to the parish. The parish seized his goods and chattels, which he had left with a gardener at Ealing, and petitioned the Court for the power to sell them in order to defray the expense of keeping his children. From the inventory which the Overseers of the Poor attached to the petition, we learn something of what a laborer's house contained. The goods were valued at £11-15-9 and make an imposing list. There were various articles of bedroom furniture—feather beds, bolsters, quilts, "a four post Bedstead with Green Harrateen Furniture" and other such items. There were several tables, including a "wainscott Dining Table," and a "leather Covered Elbow chair," a "Mahogany Tea Chest," a silver spoon, pewter dishes and plates, as well as stone ones, a copper tea kettle and coffee pot and all sorts of more ordinary pieces of furniture and kitchen utensils. There were also the inclusion of eight prints, eight old books, "some Writings," and two small looking glasses. Nor is this all. Linen and clothes are yet to come. The man's apparel consisted of an old frock, brown and snuff-colored coats, and a pair of leather breeches. Under the woman's clothes were listed

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, 1772 bundle.

<sup>2</sup> *Kent Sessions Papers*, 1772 bundle.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1786 bundle.

a striped silk gown, two black petticoats, stays, a shift, and a few children's clothes.<sup>1</sup>

That a laborer who was probably earning between 1s.8d. and 2s. a day (the work of his family may have brought in about 6d. more) should have possessed so many things, especially the items of luxury, such as prints, books, mahogany and copper articles and the like points to a standard of life more comfortable than his mere wages could permit.

That it was not an isolated instance is proved by the existence of other such inventories. The occupation of the deserting father is not in the other cases given but the probability is that the man belonged, if not to the laboring class, to that of the minor crafts and trades. The goods of a Richard Wynn, which were ordered to be seized in 1761 amounted to £16-18-4 and included similar items.<sup>2</sup> Other workingmen's possessions were more modest, however. Solomon Hobb's possessions were only valued at £9-4-6<sup>3</sup> and the "Account of Murger Foster things that we haue taken for ye Use of ye Parrish" came to only £4-4-4.<sup>4</sup> George Goff, of the parish of Merriworth in Kent, owned more what one would expect a laborer to have, strictly necessary things such as bed covering, plain furniture, and a few utensils.<sup>5</sup>

Although the first two cases may be exceptional in the number and variety of possessions, perusal of all the inventories, added to the knowledge of the laborer's dress, leads one to realize more fully that money wages and wheat prices are a most incomplete indication of the laborer's standard of life. Quite evidently the laboring people of this district owned a considerable number of household goods and a variety of clothing, and the above data lead one to think that they were certainly in a more flourishing state than one would suppose from the statistical evidence. There is other support for this belief. Grosley, for example, remarked that on passing through Kent, from Dover to London that "we

<sup>1</sup> *Middlesex Sessions Books*, no. 1229, pp. 33, 34, Jan. 1768.

<sup>2</sup> *Kent Sessions Papers*, 1761 bundle.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 1730 bundle.

<sup>5</sup> *Kent Sessions Papers*, 1754 bundle.

met a considerable number of Carriages loaded with corn and hay, which were going to the ports. Each of the drivers (who were all either laborers or husbandmen) dressed in good cloth, a warm great coat upon his back, and good boots upon his legs, rode upon a little nag; . . ."<sup>1</sup> Saussure was impressed by the fact that "English peasants are comfortably off." Although his general remarks apply principally to the farmers, he mentioned that "carters coming in from the country ride their own horses, these not being harnessed to the carts."<sup>2</sup>

The question of rent is always an important one in connection with the budget. The illustration from Davies which was quoted above showed what a boon free rent could be. While it cannot be assumed that rent-free cottages were general, they certainly occurred. And the practice of erecting cottages on the waste, without buying the required four acres of land, continued despite the fact that the act prohibiting this was not repealed until 1775. There were petitions to the Quarter Sessions asking for permission to erect such cottages, and many indictments of cottages so erected. The court frequently granted permission for the cottages to remain. An illustration is the document signed by the citizens of Stowermanth, in behalf of Samuel Forman, a day laborer, which stated that

"Whereas the Landlord of the said Samuel Forman out of some pett or Aceptions hath taken lett the said Samuel Formans house from him to a nother: so that This poor man cannot prouid a being for himselfe his Wife and Children against Mich: in the said parish nor elsewhere as yet: but being a good Labourer Wee Whose Names are hereunder subscribed . . . Are willing to assist him in the building him a house on the Lords wast: . . ."<sup>3</sup>

As the Lord of the manor had already consented, the court could hardly withhold the permission, and granted the request. Similar petitions, as well as indictments against the practice occurred in 1701, 1717, 1732, 1733, and 1750 for both Surrey and Kent<sup>4</sup>. It was one method of getting a rent free cottage.

<sup>1</sup> *A Tour to London*, 1765, vol. I, p. 17 (trans., 1772).

<sup>2</sup> *A Foreign View of England*, trans., 1902, pp. 219, 220.

<sup>3</sup> *Kent Sessions Papers*, 1701 bundle.

<sup>4</sup> The first and the last may be found in the *Kent Sessions Papers* for these years; the others in the *Surrey Bundles*.

The amount of rent the laborer paid when he did so may be estimated from the Davies' budgets. Further, in the 1824 report on laborers' wages, a Surrey justice stated that before the war (about 1790) the average rent of a cottage plus good gardens was 30s., but had then gone up to anywhere from five to ten pounds per annum. He further commented "and where cottages are in the hands of farmers, they always prohibit the laborers from keeping a pig, and claim the produce of the apple trees, and of the vine which usually covers the house . . ."<sup>1</sup> May we infer from this that the earlier conditions enabled the laborer to keep his pig or cow and to have the fruit and garden produce from his land? The well enclosed state of the southern counties does not make it likely and must have made for high rentals as a general thing. Common rights were certainly not extensive. In 1708, a laborer of Bermondsey affirmed that "he farmeth a house in the said parish under the Yearly Rent of Three pounds Tenn Shillings and that he is charged in the present assessment to the poors Rate . . ."<sup>2</sup> On account of his extreme poverty, he begged that the rate be discharged. Now, extreme poverty does not seem consistent with such a high rental at such an early date, even though Bermondsey was near London. Such isolated evidence, however, cannot prove anything, but it does suggest the existence of high rents.

The countryman's chief diversion, like that of the Londoner, consisted in going to the fair. There he could buy what luxuries and novelties he could afford and entertain himself at interludes and drolls. The number of unlicensed fairs, as well as the chartered ones, grew during the century, despite the efforts of the country justices against them. They were as zealous, with as little success, as the London magistrates. Often the ministers and churchwardens would join with the "Principal Inhabitants" of a town to request the suppression of a disorderly fair. Thus at Mitcham, Surrey, in 1771 a petition

<sup>1</sup> Report from the Select Committee on Labourers' Wages, 1824. *Minutes of Evidence*, pp. 46-48.

<sup>2</sup> *Surrey Sessions Bundles*, 1708.



## "SHEWETH

THAT a fair had been held within the said Town of Mitcham for many Years past on the Twelfth day of August for the Sale of Hardware, Toys, Ribbons and other Trifles, (without any Charter granted for that purpose) to which Fair great numbers of the lower class of People resort from all parts of the County, by means whereof Riots, Disturbances, and Irregularities frequently happen. . ."<sup>1</sup>

In August of the same year, the committee of justices appointed to accomplish the suppression could only report that the fair was "greatly weakened." The same qualified success attended the attempt to suppress the Wandsworth fair in 1771 and 1772 and their report could boast that "the concourse of people was by no means so numerous as usual."<sup>2</sup> Constables were ordered to stop the performance of interludes and other disorders at Peckham in 1773.<sup>3</sup> After 1790 with the lifting of the general ban against players, licenses for sixty days were granted by the court. Such a license was granted to Sarah Blake in 1794 to perform "Trajedies, Comedies etc." at Maidstone.<sup>4</sup> The impotence of judicial authority in the face of concerted popular desire for a prohibited form of entertainment is well illustrated by the continued failure of the justices to suppress fairs and interludes both in the country districts and in London itself.

Another aspect of the laborer's social life is concerned with his part in local government. The Webbs have recounted how the office of constable was forced upon the least responsible members of the population especially in the cities.<sup>5</sup> This took place in Surrey and Middlesex though not to any extent in Kent. In Surrey especially, it is clear that it was upon the day laborer, who was least able to spare the time or perform the duties, that the onus of this office fell. The Webbs also describe how, after the decline of the Court Leet which originally appointed the constables, the task fell to the vestry or to the present incumbent to nominate the persons from which the Quarter Sessions Court could choose the successor. The process is abundantly illustrated

<sup>1</sup> *Surrey Sessions Bundles*, 1771 bundle.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1773 bundle.

<sup>4</sup> *Kent Sessions Papers*, 1794 bundle.

<sup>5</sup> *Parish and County*, pp. 68-69 etc.



by the large number of constable lists handed in at each session. The nominations appear, from this evidence, to have been made in four different ways: by the present incumbent, by the vestry, by the town inhabitants, and, at least in one case, by the mayor.<sup>1</sup>

In Surrey the laborers predominated in the lists of nominees for constable, headborough, sidesman, and the like until the seventies. After that date, it appears to have been more usual to name a member of a trade, such as a carpenter or millwright, or a shopkeeper, and laborers were not so frequent. The change in personnel may have been due to the protests, from the laborers and their friends, which poured into the court, stating that the laborers appointed were too poor or too incompetent to serve the office. Many of these cases are so illuminating as to be worth quotation in full. The first example is for Middlesex, when the court finally discharged Edward Payne, a laborer who had been of Shepparton for three and one half years, on the ground that he was "a poor Man and not able to Serve the Said Office any longer and could not write or read and had nothing but his day labour to depend on . . ."<sup>2</sup>

A letter from William Clayton of Marden, in Surrey, read as follows:

"The Bearer hereof William Rose is my Neighbor and has very little besides what he gets by Day Labour and can neither write nor read. But I understand he was at the Sessions appointed High Constable I beleive out of A little Peak from the last High Constable, and as he is not very capable of Serving that office Should be obliged to you if you could gett him excused. . ."<sup>3</sup>

This certainly exemplifies the esteem in which the office was held—it was evidently a means of getting even with one's enemies. It was distinctly unusual, however, for a laborer to be appointed high constable, an office of some importance in the county, through which the orders of sessions were directly carried out.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Every sessions bundle contains these constable lists, generally tied up together, and I have selected random samples throughout the century which I have summarized. There are too many to give references in detail.

<sup>2</sup> *Middlesex Sessions Books*, no. 751.

<sup>3</sup> *Surrey Sessions Bundles*, 1726 bundle.

<sup>4</sup> See the Webbs' description of that office in the *Parish and the County*, ch. I.

There is some very significant evidence of the attempt of the better class inhabitants to put off the minor offices upon the laborers. It is contained in a letter to Mr. Corbett, the Clerk of the Peace for Surrey.

Clapham 17 April 1732

"Mr. Corbett/

The Gent of Clapham haveing lately some mismanagem<sup>t</sup> as to ye Watch which the Town are at ye Expence off, & to avoid all pretence of Clamour (from the Lower sort of people, that Gent would not serve the meaner offices of Constable etc.) at our Vestry the last Easter White Woolley & John Love, Esq<sup>s</sup> two Gent of the Town accepted & were chosen Constable & Headborough.

The Gent are apprehensive that some out of ye way person or other, will attempt to frustrate this Resolution. If there should be anything Stirred at ye Quarter Sessions to ye contrary, you *may assure* the Chairman it's contrary to the Intenscon of the Gent of ye Town, and can be done with no good view, but only for the sake of opposition.

You'll be *pleased* to observe that by the Gents *signing* this Lre, that what I write is by their direcon I am Sir

Your most Obed<sup>t</sup> humbl<sup>t</sup> Sert.

W<sup>m</sup> James.<sup>1</sup>

The letter was signed by many gentlemen. The fate of this "Resolution" or its efficacy in quelling the protests of the indignant laborers is unknown, but it is clear that they did not submit to their fate in silence.

Another reason why the burden of parish office was particularly hard on the lower classes was the likelihood of being fined for neglect of duty. And as many of the office holders were too ignorant to know what the duties were, they were doubly liable. Such a plight moved Mr. Morton of Ryegate to write to the court in behalf of a constable of his parish, who was "frightened extremely with the apprehension of being fined for having neglected returning the list of Free holders."<sup>2</sup> What else could be expected of a "poor ignorant labouring man"?

In Kent the parish offices were not served as frequently by day laborers. Most of the constable lists show that the next higher social strata were drawn upon, with occasional appointments of both gentlemen and laborers. Constables, borsholders, and the

<sup>1</sup> *Surrey Sessions Bundles*, 1732 bundle.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

like were for the most part farmers, yeomen, carpenters, victuallers, bricklayers, shopkeepers etc.—people in a distinctly better economic situation than the laborers.<sup>1</sup> The general tendency is illustrated by a letter recommending that John Tendon of Greenwich, a hatter, be appointed constable. He is described as a “Substantial Freeholder, and well Qualified to Serve that Office . . .”.<sup>2</sup>

The desire to avoid local governmental duties, which was manifested by the responsible citizens of Surrey and Middlesex, may be another tendency chargeable to the influence of London. Why this irresponsibility did not extend to Kent is not clear. Parish offices in that county seem to have been regarded with some respect and their administration was customarily taken in hand by the solid middle classes, with some help from both above and below. Perhaps the social stratification which still exists there in very distinct form today, forbade the very lowest class in the social scale from undertaking any sort of public office, even when it was as troublesome as that of constable.

If we are to progress at all from the vague state of mind by which the laborers were relegated to a class which was described in general and indistinct terms, it is desirable to know something about the character of the working class in various districts. William Marshall gave some indication of the character of the laborer in the south, but in a somewhat biased manner, as he was quite evidently prejudiced in favor of his native Yorkshire. He commented upon the rusticity and backwardness of the farmers in the vale of London and said that this applied to the work people as well—“The children of farm laborers, and other poor working people, in the neighborhood of London, rank among the most illiterate of their class, in the Island.”<sup>3</sup> He attributed this to the lack of free schools and the fact that many of them were derelicts from the country districts where they had committed crimes. In running his own farm he had a good deal of trouble with his servants. An impartial observer might lay this

<sup>1</sup> See list of nominations in any bundle of the *Kent Sessions Papers*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1740 bundle.

<sup>3</sup> *Minutes . . . on Agriculture . . .* 1799, vol. I, pp. 24–26.

to Marshall's cold-blooded calculation of the maximum effort to be derived from them at the least return,<sup>1</sup> but he put it down to their "idle, insolent, or thievish" character, which could only be overcome by low wages.<sup>2</sup> It is rather surprising that a man of Marshall's acute observational powers should uphold the popular theory that sheer necessity was the only stimulus to work among the lower classes, especially as the better wages and general economic opportunities in the north, where the laborer was much more intelligent and industrious, are such clear disproof of the idea.

Marshall was no more enthusiastic about the Maidstone workmen whom he accused of a "want of alertness in the ordinary work of husbandry". His explanation is curious — the fact that they worked with sluggish animals.<sup>3</sup> The protests of the Surrey laborers against being "used" to carry the unwanted burden of parish offices would seem to indicate more spirit. In line with this is a case in which one John Martyr apparently tried to get his servant indicted for deserting him in harvest time. In the official examination it appeared that he "chid" his servant for being longer than usual in fetching a load of corn, asking him why he took so much time when there was so much else to be done. Whereupon the servant "Reply'd damm him he might get them that would do it Sooner . . ." and challenged his master to fight him. Mr. Martyr commented indignantly: "I am sure if Servants are in harvest to neglect their Masters worke at that rate ye farmers will have a sad time of it . . ."<sup>4</sup> This laborer may have been somewhat dilatory about his work, but his disposition did not appear to lack spirit. But again it is to be observed that these instances of lower class rebellion are all from Surrey. The Kent laborers do not seem to have been so high-spirited. One may infer that they were kept in their places with greater success. Their

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 337, 338. See also where he described how he excited the laborers to get twice as much harvesting by giving them as much ale as they could drink. He calculated that this cost him much less than he would have had to pay in wages for extra hands to do the same amount of work.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 304, 305.

<sup>3</sup> *Rural Economy of Southern Counties*, vol. I, p. 56.

<sup>4</sup> Both the letter and the information are in the 1717 *Surrey Sessions Bundle*.



"sluggishness" may perhaps be thereby accounted for — that class lines were so firmly drawn that there was little chance for the lower classes to change their economic or social position. Lethargy is the inevitable result of such a situation.

The counties in the vicinity of London are characterized by decreasing wages, the farther London is left behind, but by practically the same prices in the essential commodities. The charts, therefore, indicate less clearly than was the case in London proper, a gain in the purchasing power of wages in terms of wheat during the century. The cost of wheat was a much larger proportion of the laborer's wages than in London. To offset this fact, however, is the greater frequency of perquisites in the more rural places. There was as well a much greater possibility of supplementary earnings in the grain harvest, the hop field, or the fruit orchards. The greater separation of social classes in the country, however, was less favorable to the spread of upper class manners and luxuries, which was so prevalent in London. This must have been particularly the case in Kent, where social stratification seems to have been more emphasized. The inventories of household goods, the lists of stolen clothes, which have been discussed above lead one to picture the country laborer as not too badly off. In actual possessions he undoubtedly had the advantage over the London laborer, who lived in lodgings and shifted about with great frequency.

The whole London area, including its metropolitan hinterland, may really be considered as one. Statistical evidence is not against the possibility of a progressively better standard of life during the century. On the other hand, it is not positively in its favor except in London. The best that one can say is that from 1700 to 1790 there was a sure basis of low wheat prices and slightly rising money wages upon which an improvement in standard of life might have been built. I am in agreement with Mrs. George that it did occur in the city itself. To a less extent it probably occurred throughout the whole metropolitan area of the capital.



PART II  
THE WEST OF ENGLAND



THE WEST

## PART II

### THE WEST OF ENGLAND

IN the fertile regions to the West of England the common laborer lived amid economic and social conditions for the most part very different from those prevailing in London and its metropolitan countryside. Oxfordshire was somewhat touched by London's influence, but Gloucestershire, Devonshire, and Somersetshire, with all of which counties we shall deal, lay in a rural backwater, little affected by the development of excessive urban conditions in London or in the North. Despite the commercial eminence of Bristol, of Plymouth and of Dartmouth, despite the importance of the woollen industry, the West was then, as it is now, primarily an agricultural area. Although the woollen industry had early developed a capitalistic form of the putting-out system, it was quite compatible with an agricultural community, and by the end of the eighteenth century, the wool manufacture of the West had begun to shrink in importance as compared to the Yorkshire branch. It was still highly significant in the eighteenth century, however, in all the four counties.<sup>1</sup> In Gloucestershire its heyday is said to have been from 1690 to 1760.<sup>2</sup> Not till the end of the century did the Somerset industry undergo a decline,<sup>3</sup> although in Devonshire the decay seems to have begun somewhat earlier.<sup>4</sup> Stroud and Froome were still active centres of the woollen industry when the century ended, and did not really lose ground to the North until the nineteenth century. Smaller industrial centers, however, such as North and South Moulton, were affected at a considerably earlier date.

The activity of the clothing trade in the eighteenth century is attested to by the many items concerning it which may be found

<sup>1</sup> See Defoe's description of the thriving state of the broadcloth manufacture in the valley of the Avon, of serges in Devonshire, etc. in 1723 or 1724. *Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, vol. I, pp. 221, 223, 266-67; 282. (1927 reprint of original 1724-26 edition).

<sup>2</sup> *Victoria County History*, Gloucestershire, vol. II, p. 160.

<sup>3</sup> Billingsley, pp. 160-162, 295-296.

<sup>4</sup> Vancouver, pp. 385-88, 391-94.

in the Sessions Order Books. The Gloucestershire records may be taken as a representative example. Most significant in that county was the quarrel between the clothiers and the weavers, concerning the assessments of 1727 and 1756, which grew to such heights that it was brought before Parliament. The weavers insisted that the clothiers had not kept to the 1727 rates, that they could not live on the wages paid, and petitioned for a new assessment. The clothiers, on the other hand, alleged that they were unable to pay the rates, due to foreign competition and the decay of the trade. The latter finally won out, after a reversal of Parliamentary decision.<sup>1</sup> The signs of decay were even at this date apparent in the evidence given during the controversy. There were many other cases connected with industry — the fine of a Minchinhampton clothier for paying his broadweavers in goods instead of money,<sup>2</sup> orders for clothiers and weavers to pay their servants back wages, etc.<sup>3</sup> In the course of the wage cases, the whole wage agreement was frequently discussed.<sup>4</sup> An interesting case occurred in 1796, when a Bisley clothmaker was fined £40 for buying broadcloth from a weaver who was at the time employed by another. and had sold cloth without the consent of his master.<sup>5</sup> The existence of many similar cases brings

<sup>1</sup> This whole controversy has received detailed attention in Lipson, *History of Woollen and Worsted Industry*, London, 1921; Hewins, *English Trade and Finance*, London, 1892, and the *Victoria County History*. The most important original sources are the *Gloucester Quarter Sessions Order Books* (especially the 1756 Minutes), the *House of Commons Journal*, and a contemporary pamphlet — *A State of the Case*, London, 1757. All of these references are given in an article in the *English Historical Review*, (July 1928) on *Wage Assessments in the Eighteenth Century*.

<sup>2</sup> *Gloucestershire Order Books*, Michaelmas Sessions 1727. Samuel Yeate, a clothier of Minchinhampton, appealed against a fine levied upon him because he had paid Isaac Edwards, a Broadweaver, "Goods by way of Truck instead of money for his Wages in Weaving Contrary to the Statute . . ."

<sup>3</sup> *Gloucestershire Order Books*, 1731, 1733, 1750, 1755.

<sup>4</sup> *Gloucestershire Order Books*, 1731 and 1750. The latter agreement between Thomas Palser, clothworker, and William Hewett (probably a boy) is particularly interesting. Hewett agreed "to serve him (Palser) in the said Business of Clothworking for three years, at and for the Wages of three Shillings a Week for the First Year, Three Shillings and Sixpence a Week for the Second Year and Four Shillings a Week for the Third Year, that the said William Hewett was to Work only Twelve Hours in the Day and to have one penny for every Hour he should Work above the Twelve Hours . . .".

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Easter Sessions 1796.

out clearly one of the difficulties inherent in the putting-out system,— the lack of control over the workers.

At the peak of its activity, Froome, in Somerset, sent seven wagons at a time, laden with bales of cloth for London. A carting firm in Taunton were paid £5000 to 6000 each year for transporting woollens from Wiveliscombe, another important manufacturing centre.<sup>1</sup> Wellington, Shepton Mallet, Chard, Tiverton, Barnstable, and other Devonshire and Somersetshire towns flourished throughout most of the eighteenth century. The yarn of Porlock, on the Somerset coast, was in great demand by cloth factors, who came from various parts of the West to buy it at the Dunster yarn market. Even in Oxfordshire, which is only on the edge of the western woollen district, Banbury became famous for its woollen plush, and Whitney well known abroad for its blankets. Chipping Norton and Burford, in the Cotswolds, however, were among those towns which showed an early decline in the industry.

Yet the woollen industry of the West had lost its momentum. Its eighteenth century activity was the last feverish attempt of a patient doomed to death, or at least to permanent invalidism. Ground was consistently lost to the upstart industry of the North, which was so soon to supersede it. Prohibition of the export of wool such as the Acts of 1688, 1692 and 1800 in Somerset, failed to stimulate the manufacture of cloth. Although the putting-out system attained a capitalistic organization not duplicated elsewhere in England,<sup>2</sup> it had advanced little at the end of the century from its state at the beginning. The workers combined agricultural labor with weaving and other operations. Hand labor was everywhere used. The introduction of machinery, indeed, was the factor which was to cause the final blow to the industry in this region. The workers refused to use the new machinery which the manufacturers attempted to introduce. In 1776 the clothworkers rioted and entirely destroyed machines

<sup>1</sup> *Victoria County History*, Somerset, Vol. II, p. 413.

<sup>2</sup> The Somerset industry among the first to be capitalistically organized, in about 1715. See *op. cit.*, Somerset, vol. II, p. 322. See also Lipson, *The Economic History of England*, vols. II and III.



introduced at Shepton Mallet.<sup>1</sup> Even a shearing machine invented by a Stroud manufacturer was successfully opposed.<sup>2</sup> This, combined with the replacement of water power by steam,<sup>3</sup> and the shift of fashion to a popular demand for worsteds (made largely in Yorkshire) completed the fate of the woollen industry of the West. To the inability of the trade to adapt itself to new economic methods and conditions, Lipson adds still another reason for its relative decline, namely the greater interest of the manufacturers in the sports of country gentlemen than in the efficiency of their industry.<sup>4</sup> It must be emphasized, however, that the decline was relative rather than absolute. Side by side with towns containing abandoned mills, and the once prosperous stone houses of weavers and cloth factors, built in the prime of the manufacture, there exist towns such as Stroud which still make the finest woollen cloth in the country. The popular branch of the industry, however, had definitely moved to the North by the end of the eighteenth century.

There were a number of subsidiary industries, more of local than of general economic consequence. Among them may be mentioned the flourishing glove trade of Woodstock in Oxfordshire, the iron industry of the Forest of Dean, the copper works on the Avon, the mines of Somerset (the most important being coal and zinc), the pin trade of Gloucester, silk weaving at Taunton, and shipping along the north and south coasts of Devon.<sup>5</sup> The economic significance of these industries for this study lies chiefly in the supplementary employment they offered to the women and children of laboring families. The importance of the earnings of members of the family other than the chief wage earner will be dealt with later in the section upon real earnings.

With the exception of Oxfordshire, the West was slow to adopt

<sup>1</sup> *Victoria County History*, Somersetshire, vol. II, p. 417.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Gloucestershire, vol. II, p. 194.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Somersetshire, vol. II, p. 322.

<sup>4</sup> *History of Woollen and Worsteds Industry*, London 1921, pp. 251-254. In Chapter VI, Lipson gives a good popular account of the geographical distribution of the industry in the eighteenth century and its shift after the introduction of machinery and the factory system. He relies on Defoe as a main source.

<sup>5</sup> See Rudder, Marshall, Young, Billingsley, Davis, Vancouver and the *Victoria County History* for general description of these counties.

the improved methods of farming which the so-called "agricultural revolution" of the eighteenth century introduced. In fact, William Marshall remarked:

"But what strikes us most forcibly, in examining it (the peculiarity of the region), is that in the lapse of centuries, its Rural Practices should not have assimilated, more freely, with those of the Island at large."<sup>1</sup>

This backwardness in agricultural methods was due partly, no doubt, to the relative lack of enclosures in the region, and partly to the difficulty of communication with the rest of the country. The roads in the West were notoriously poor.<sup>2</sup> The enclosure movement gained headway during the century only in Oxfordshire, although enclosure was taking place somewhat more rapidly in both Gloucestershire and Somersetshire by 1800. Devonshire was almost untouched by the eighteenth century enclosure movement and there were no parliamentary enclosures there at all during the eighteenth century.<sup>3</sup>

Oxfordshire was most affected of the western counties considered here by the enclosure movement. Forty-one enclosures totalling 68,480 acres took place between 1768 and 1808, a greater proportion, according to Young, than in any other country during the same period.<sup>4</sup> There were only about 100 parishes unenclosed by the end of the century and those were grouped for the most part about the only large tracts of waste lands, Ottermoor and Whichwood. Davis and Young, both strong advocates of enclosure, urged the complete enclosure of the county. By 1808 Arthur Young noted a great improvement in Oxford agriculture and it is true with enclosure, the traditional one and two crop rotation with fallow was gradually succeeded by a more complicated rotation, including turnips, clover and saintfoin. Some

<sup>1</sup> William Marshall, *Rural Economy in the West of England*, vol. II, p. 231.

<sup>2</sup> *Victoria County History*, Somerset, vol. II, p. 323.

<sup>3</sup> Vancouver, pp. 132-138. Devonshire was one of the early enclosed counties. According to Slater, by the end of the sixteenth century, both Devon and Cornwall were completely enclosed, except for Dartmoor and Exmoor. (*English Peasantry and Enclosure of Common Fields*, p. 248). In the eighteenth century, however, local authorities note the existence of a large amount of waste and moorland which had apparently escaped the earlier movement and were not affected by the enclosures of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

<sup>4</sup> Young, *General View of the Agriculture of Oxford*, pp. 87-88.

enclosure took place both in Gloucestershire and Somerset, although Gloucester, despite the eighty enclosure acts from 1760 to 1800,<sup>1</sup> was still largely unenclosed by the end of the century and cultivated on the open field system. Of the Vale of Berkeley, Gloucestershire, Marshall said in 1789:

"... The size of farms has of late years increased. This circumstance I have heard complained of, as increasing the number of poor; and, in consequence, the poor's rate. Farms, at present, rise from fifty to two, three, or four hundred pounds a year."<sup>2</sup>

The arguments for and against enclosure, set forth by almost every eighteenth century writer on agricultural and labor conditions, cannot be examined here, but it may be noted that Billingsley found that the poor rate increased less in the enclosed than in the unenclosed parishes of Somerset.<sup>3</sup>

The sixteenth century enclosure movement left Somerset practically untouched and it was not until the end of the eighteenth century that enclosures became numerous. By 1794, however, 900,000 acres in all were enclosed, with others impending. There were still many unenclosed commons in the north and east. The stimulus to the movement at that time was the increasing demand for corn on the part of manufacturing towns, and the rising price of grain.<sup>4</sup>

The large amount of waste and commons in Devonshire makes the situation there somewhat comparable to that of the North. A few moorlands were enclosed successfully, but the greater part of the wastes remained open to villagers and cottagers for pasturage of cows or pigs and as a source of fuel. Some enclosures took place around Exeter but on the whole Devonshire remained outside the main current of eighteenth century enclosures, undoubtedly because it had been enclosed at a much earlier date.

In general, the size of farms in the West was not large. There were a number of large estates, but most "middling farmers" had from 100 to 300 acres. Arthur Young considered the Ox-

<sup>1</sup> *A Six Weeks Tour Through the Southern Counties*, pp. 146, 154.

<sup>2</sup> *The Rural Economy of Gloucestershire*, London, 1789, vol. II, p. 90.

<sup>3</sup> Billingsley, p. 50.

<sup>4</sup> *Victoria County History*, Somerset, Vol. II, p. 318.

fordshire farms too small for good husbandry. Around Dartmoor farms were not more than 100 acres, and in Somerset farms were seldom over 200 acres.

We find, then, in the West a fertile agricultural area, slow to succumb to the effects of enclosures (except for Devon) and backward in adopting modern agricultural methods. It was a reactionary region in an economic sense, unable to adapt either its industry or its agriculture to new economic circumstances without a very gradual process of adjustment. Before adaptation could take place in the woollen industry the centre of the manufacture had shifted, leaving the West without its staple industry. In agriculture the slowness of the change did not matter so much, and the West gradually continued to increase the crops for which it was already famous. The whole section was and is still noted for its dairy products. Butter and cheese were shipped from Devon and Somerset to London. Livestock were bred for meat, and boars for brawn in Oxfordshire. Corn was grown throughout the region, and potatoes, introduced in the eighteenth century, were becoming a staple crop for home consumption. But above all the region was famous for its orchards and their product, cider. From the point of view of the laborer, the abundance of cider was particularly important, for there is no district in England with which we deal, in which drink forms as great a part of the agricultural or general wage as in this district. Wages were paid partly in cider, or beer, although cider was predominantly the beverage of the region.



## CHAPTER III

### WAGES IN THE WEST

It is now possible to go on to a detailed analysis of the wages and conditions of life of both the agricultural and general laborer, with some understanding of his general economic milieu. Especially in the eighteenth century, a knowledge of the industrial and economic structure is essential, for money wages were a much less important part of the real return to labor than they are now. Perquisites, the survival of mediaeval rights and privileges, supplementary earnings of women and children formed a large portion of the wages of the laboring class.

#### WAGES IN AGRICULTURE

Numerous scattered statements of agricultural wages have been compiled into the following table:<sup>1</sup>

Agricultural Wages (Oxfordshire)					
	<i>Winter</i>	<i>Spring</i>	<i>Summer</i>	<i>Harvest</i>	<i>Hay</i>
1769					
General Average	10d.—1s.	.....	11d. (reaping) 1s.4d. (mowing grass)	.....	.....
1768					
Whitney	1s. (no beer)	.....	.....	2s. (no beer)	1s.6d. (no beer)
Hanborough	1s.	.....	.....	1s.6d.	1s.2d.
1790					
General Average	1s.1d.	.....	1s.6d.	2s.2d.	.....
1808					
General Average	1s.7d.	1s.11d.	1s.4d. 1s.8d. (reaping) 2s.8d. (mowing grass)	3s.2d.	1s.11d.

<sup>1</sup> Sources:

1769 — Young, *View of Agriculture of Oxfordshire*, 1808, p. 71.

1768 — Young, *Six Weeks Tour Through the Southern Counties*, London, 1772 (3rd ed.), p. 138, pp. 142-3.

1790 — Young, *View of Agriculture of Oxfordshire*, 1808, p. 72.

1808 — Young, *Ibid.*, p. 322.



Agricultural Wages (Cotswolds)<sup>1</sup>

	Winter	Spring	Summer	Harvest	Hay
1768					
Burford					
Sherborn	8d., 9d., 10d.	8d., 9d., 10d.	1s.	1s. 8d.	.....
(Shipton)	1s.	1s. 2d.	1s. 6d.	1s. 8d.	.....
			(mowing)		
1779	10d.	1s.	1s. 6d.	1s. 8d. or 2s.	.....
			(mowing grass)		
1789	1s.	1s.	1s. 6d.	2s. (with-out board or beer)	1s. 2d.
			(mowing)		
1794	1s. to 1s. 2d.	.....	.....	2s. (with beer or malt)	1s. 6d. to 1s. 8d.
1808					
(Burford)	1s. to 1s. 4d. (no beer)	.....	.....	2s. 6d. to 3s. (with beer)	.....

## Vale of Gloucester

	Winter	Spring	Summer	Harvest	Hay
1768					
(Gloucester)	8d., 9d., 10d.	.....	1s.	1s. 8d.	.....
			1s. 2d.		
			(mowing)		
1789	1s. (and drink)	.....	1s. 6d.	1s. with board or 2s. 6d. to 3s. and drink	1s. 2d. to 1s. 6d.
			(and drink, mowing)		
1794	1s.	.....	.....	30s. and board (per month)	1s. 6d. and beer

## Forest of Dean

	Winter	Spring	Summer	Harvest	Hay
1768					
Newnham	10d. and 1s.	.....	.....	1s. and board and beer	1s. 6d.
Chepstow	1s.	1s. 2d.	1s. 8d.	1s. and board and beer	.....
			and beer and board (mowing grass)		

<sup>1</sup> These figures are compiled from the following sources:(a) 1768 — from Arthur Young's *Six Weeks Tour Through the Southern Counties*, London, 1772 (3rd ed.), pp. 147, 149.(b) 1779 — from Samuel Rudder's *A New History of Gloucestershire*, Cirencester, 1779, p. 22.(c) 1789 — from William Marshall's *The Rural Economy of Gloucestershire*, London, 1789, vol. II, p. 29.(d) 1794 — from George Turner's *General View of the Agriculture . . . of Gloucester*, London, 1794.

Agricultural Wages (Somersetshire)<sup>1</sup>

	<i>Winter</i>	<i>Spring</i>	<i>Summer</i>	<i>Harvest</i>	<i>Hay</i>
1768					
Bristol and Bath	1s. to 1s.2d.	.....	1s.6d. (with dinner and beer) mowing and reaping	.....	.....
1771					
General	1s. with beer or cider	.....	.....	1s. with board	1s. with board
1791					
General	1s. to 1s.4d. with beer or cider	.....	.....	1s. to 1s.4d. with board	1s. to 1s.4d. with board
1794-6					
Yeovil and Taunton	1s. and cider	.....	1s.4d. and cider	.....	.....
North	1s.2d., cider or small beer	.....	.....	1s.6d. dinner and beer	1s.6d. dinner and beer
South West	1s. and beer	.....	.....	.....	.....
Middle	1s.2d. and 5 pts. cider	.....	1s. and meat and drink	.....	.....

Agricultural Wages (Devonshire)<sup>2</sup>

	<i>Winter</i>	<i>Spring</i>	<i>Summer</i>	<i>Harvest</i>	<i>Hay</i>
1794-6					
West Devon	1s. and one qt. cider	1s. and one qt. cider	.....	1s. (full board)	1s. and more liquor
1808					
West Central	.....	1s.2d. (2 qts. cider and bread and cheese)	.....	.....	.....
General	1s.2d. and 3 pts. drink	.....	1s.2d. and 3 pts. drink	1s.2d. and drink and board	.....

<sup>1</sup> 1768 — Young, *op. cit.*, pp. 175-6.1771 } — *Victoria County History*, Somerset, vol. II, p. 321.  
1791 }1794-6 — Billingsley, T., *General View of Agriculture of Somerset*, pp. 164, 153, 120, 21.<sup>2</sup> 1794-6 — W. Marshall, *Rural Economy in West of England*, vol. I, p. 321.1808 — Vancouver, C., *General View of Agriculture . . . of Devon*, 1808, pp. 361 ff.

In the twenty years from 1769 to 1790 Oxfordshire agricultural wages had risen extremely little. The general average (computed by Arthur Young) went up 1d. for winter wages, and possibly twopence for summer wages, taking the mowing rate as the base. Harvest rates had risen from 1768 to 1790, twopence at least, possibly more. By 1808 the rates had been forced up considerably by the price inflation of the Napoleonic Wars.

The Cotswold district which includes parts of Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire appears to have paid a wage somewhat below the usual Oxford rate. Winter wages, except at Shipton,<sup>1</sup> were below 1s. until 1789; harvest wages were at least twopence under those for Oxfordshire. All of the rates, however, rose to some extent in the Cotswolds from 1768 to 1808. In the Vale of Gloucester the wages differed little from those of the Cotswolds. Harvest wages seem to have gone up somewhat more in the Vale, to 2s.6d. as compared to 2s., but winter and mowing rates were about the same. Young commented on the Gloucester winter wages as being low, saying that "the stoutest fellows often want work for 9d. and cannot readily get it."<sup>2</sup> The Forest of Dean figures for 1768 are higher than the Vale of Cotswold rates and more in line with those for Oxfordshire. The Chepstow rates are certainly higher and the Newnham winter wages are larger as well.

As we progress to the South West, the rates change very little. In 1768 the Somerset wages were about the same as those we have already examined. If anything, these Somerset wages are a trifle higher, witness the Bristol and Bath winter rate of 1s.2d. in 1768, 1s.6d. with board for mowing and reaping. By 1791 1s.4d. was the upper range of winter money wages, but in 1794-6 1s.2d. is the highest rate found for any district. We have no Devonshire figures from these sources for a date earlier than 1794-6. At that time 1s. was the rate for all the year, except that at harvest and hay more liquor or full board were given in

<sup>1</sup> Young observed about Shipton that "day-labour used all winter to be 8d. 9d. and 10d. a day; but the last (winter) the farmers raised it to 1s. for the first time, on account of the dearness of provisions, . . ." See p. 149 in the *Six Weeks Tour Through the Southern Counties*, London, 1772 (3rd ed.). Probably the Shipton wage increase merely anticipated that of the Cotswolds in general.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 151.

addition. By 1808 the rate had gone up to 1s.2d. with the same allowances.

Additional evidence on Somerset agricultural wages comes from the private records of Dunster Castle.<sup>1</sup>

1752	Work on the fields	10d. and 1s.4d. per day
1765	Labour on the Castle Farm	1s. per day (Oct.-Dec.)
1766	Labour on the Castle farm at Marsh	1s. per day (Jan.-July)
	Buds Meadows	1s. per day
	Labour in the Castle gardens	1s. per day (Jan.-Dec.)

These wages do not include drink, for frequent supplementary items appeared on the bills as "Ale given to the Labourers." These wages are quite in line with those quoted for 1768 previously. Probably the 10d. rate of 1752 refers to ordinary winter labor, and the 1s.4d. to mowing or harvest or some more highly paid work.

The Chamberlain's Accounts of Bath yielded one or two scattered wage rates.<sup>2</sup>

1701	"helping the Plow" and "work in the Green"	1s. per day
1706-7	"abot the Trees in the Walks"	1s. per day
	"work with a Plough at handdown"	1s. per day
1711-12	for "work in the Walks"	1s. and 1s.6d. per day

Undoubtedly 1s. was the ordinary laborer's wage for work about the municipal gardens and streets. The 1s.6d. rate is only quoted twice and probably applies to a more skilled gardener. These rates are exactly the same as those paid the strictly agricultural labor.

Although the wage paid to the agricultural worker is very nearly the same throughout the entire region, certain regional differences are suggested. The Cotswolds appear to have been a slightly lower wage rate district than most of the others. In 1768 the winter wage near Bristol and Bath was 1s. and 1s.2d. whereas the general rate was 1s. alone. In 1794-6, Yeovil and Taunton and the southwest of Somerset were still paying 1s. and cider or beer, while the North and middle districts paid 1s.2d. with cider and beer. As late as 1808, the wage paid for winter

<sup>1</sup> I am greatly indebted to G. F. Luttrell, Esq., and his son, who made the surviving eighteenth century accounts of the Castle available for my use and were most hospitable as well.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. II, at the Reference Library, Bath.

work around the town of Oxford was 2s. (no beer), whereas the usual winter rate was 1s.6d. with beer. The laborer's daily ration of beer cost no more than 2d. so that the Oxford wage is still at a higher level, if beer is included with the other figures. In general, it looks as if districts in the neighborhood of the large towns paid a rate 1d. or 2d. higher than was generally the case. These figures are so scattered that no general conclusion can be made from them, but we shall be able to test this regional hypothesis later on.

Arthur Young concocted the following table attempting to show the relationship between the distance from London and wages.<sup>1</sup>

	<i>Miles</i>	<i>Winter</i> s.d.	<i>Summer</i> s.d.	<i>Harvest</i> s.d.	<i>Medium</i> <sup>2</sup> s.d.
Stokenchurch, Oxon.	40	6-0	6-0	12-0	7-1
Between					
Tetsford and Oxford	45	6-0	7-6	12-0	7-2
Between					
Woodstock and Whitney	65	6-0	6-6	9-0	6-6
Between					
Bristol and Bath	112	6-0	7-0	8-6	6-7

What Young wanted to show was that wages decreased as the distance increased, but the table does not clearly indicate an inverse relation. Winter wages were the same; summer wages grew larger as the distance from London increased; harvest wages are the only set which show a decrease. The difficulty is that London is not the only metropolitan area which affects the wage rates of the country. Just as London had its own metropolitan region, so other cities and towns had theirs on a smaller scale. The summer rates and the medium go up for both Oxford and Bristol. That is to be expected. Each of those cities formed an economic centre for the country immediately around it and higher wage rates are to be presumed. It is interesting that Young's table tends to confirm the regional differences indicated by the scattered agricultural figures.

It is not easy to tell how much these rates were supplemented by perquisites of various kinds. As the tables show, drink and

<sup>1</sup> *Six Weeks Tour Through the Southern Counties*, London, 1772, 3rd ed., pp. 333-4.

<sup>2</sup> The "medium" is estimated on the basis of winter 26 weeks, spring 21, and harvest 5; and includes a monetary equivalent for beer, cider and meals. See *Idem*.



board were sometimes specified in addition to the money wage, and sometimes not. The presumption is, however, that where a money rate alone was quoted, without specification to the contrary, that drink is to be understood. The comments of the authorities make it clear that in the West cider and sometimes beer were consistently given to the laborer as well as the money wage. In Devonshire, as the table indicates, the money wage was 1s. per day all the year round. Additional exertions at hay or harvest were repaid amply by board and "very extraordinary drinks and sittings over ale and cider."<sup>1</sup> There was as well the harvest frolic at each farmer's home to which all who had worked with him at harvest time were invited. Sometimes a laborer would work one day during harvest for his drink and board but chiefly for an invitation to the next harvest frolic. The regular Devonshire farm hands were also allowed to purchase wheat and barley at a price which was considerably below the market price, and Vancouver felt that this practice did much to compensate for the rise in prices in the last part of the century.<sup>2</sup> Frequently the laborer was given small pieces of land by the farmer for raising potatoes, and he was usually able to keep a pig as well. Add to this the rights of inter-commonage which were especially prevalent in Devonshire, but were existent in some degree all over the West, and it may be inferred that money was perhaps the least part of the real earnings of the agricultural community.

Many rates of wages for women are quoted, too. Women received anywhere from 6d. to 10d. a day for ordinary labor such as weeding, winter farm work, and so on. In Devonshire they were given 8d. for spreading dung and the same rate in Oxfordshire for haying, though sometimes higher. In harvest in Oxfordshire they usually received a shilling, with board, or a somewhat higher rate without board. Children were frequently employed to pick up stones or for other such tasks at the rate of 3d. or 4d. a day.<sup>3</sup> Thus the farm laborer's earnings and perquisites were supplemented from yet another source, the earnings of his wife

<sup>1</sup> Vancouver, Charles, *General View of the Agriculture of Devon*, 1808, p. 361.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 361-362.

<sup>3</sup> Dunster Castle Accounts list many payments to boys in 1765-6 at this rate.

and children. It must also be remembered that a great deal of farm labor throughout this entire district was done by the task and not by the day, which, though harder work, was considerably more profitable.<sup>1</sup>

Harvesting was frequently paid by the season, 30s. with full board. Marshall approved of the Gloucestershire "method of victualling harvestmen" as "singularly judicious." He said: ". . . They have *no regular dinner*. Their breakfast is cold meat. Their refreshment in the field bread and cheese, with six or eight quarts of beverage. At night, when they return home, a *hot supper*;—and, after it, each man a quart of strong liquor; . . ."<sup>2</sup> The hours of work were as customary, from dawn to dusk, although in Devonshire they worked only from 7 to 12, and from 1 to between 5 and 6 o'clock. In summer the Devon laborer might be seen trudging home quite early in the evening. This was due to a custom of the country which understood the completion of a certain task to be equivalent to a day's labor, and not to idleness.<sup>3</sup> Men were generally employed for harvesting,<sup>4</sup> but women were used as well, as is apparent from the many quotations of their wages in the above table. In Devonshire the men did the thrashing of wheat, and it was then bound up by women.<sup>5</sup>

A comparison of the current rates with those given in the wage assessments of County Justices is not without interest. In Gloucestershire there is nothing earlier than the 1732 wage assessment,<sup>6</sup> which set the following wages for the whole county:

Mower in hay harvest	1s. with drink	1s. 2d. without drink
Mower and reaper corn	1s. with diet	
Other day labor from }	{ 8d. with drink only	4d. with diet
Corn to hay harvest }	{ 10d. without drink or diet.	

Young's figures for 1768 show very little change. They are

<sup>1</sup> Young estimated that one-fourth as much again could be earned by piece work as compared to day labor. *Op. cit.*, pp. 335-6. Billingsley also favored contract labor, in which the master found oxen and food, the ploughman labor and a driver, and was paid by the piece. *Op. cit.*, p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> Marshall, *Rural Economy of Gloucestershire*, London, 1789, vol. I, pp. 101, 102.

<sup>3</sup> Vancouver, p. 363.

<sup>4</sup> Marshall, *Op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 49.

<sup>5</sup> Vancouver, p. 151.

<sup>6</sup> In the *Gentleman's Magazine*, for May 1732. Quoted by Rogers and Latimer.

somewhat higher only on the assumption that they included drink.

There is an exceptionally complete series of wage assessments for Devonshire, running throughout the whole century. The assessments found were for 1700-1704, 1712, 1716-1722, 1724-1726, 1728-1733, 1740, 1741, 1750, 1752, 1753, 1778, and, except for 1701, 1732, 1750 and 1778, they were reissues of previous assessments, without change in rates. The daily rates given by the Justices are as follows:<sup>1</sup>

*Husbandry Servants and Labourers*

Allhallowtide until Candlemas

5d. with meat and drink throughout entire period

11d. without meat and drink, 1700-1732

12d. without meat and drink, 1733-1778

Candlemas until Allhallowtide

6d. with meat and drink for entire period

12d. without meat and drink for entire period

Mowing of Corn and Grass

8d. with meat and drink for entire period

1s.4d. without meat and drink for entire period

Beating <sup>2</sup>

7d. with meat and drink, 1700-1741

1s.2d. without meat and drink, 1700-1741

*Women Labourers*

At Hay

3d. with meat and drink throughout entire period

7d. without meat and drink, 1700-1

6d. without meat and drink, 1702-1753

8d. without meat and drink, 1778

<sup>1</sup> These assessments have been taken out of the Sessions Rolls and put into a separate folder in the Devonshire Castle (sessions house) and were called to my attention by Mr. Jones who is in charge of the records. My notes have been checked with those of Miss Margaret Gay who also copied the rates in connection with her work on the Statute of 1563. A Devonshire assessment for 1713 is quoted in A. H. A. Hamilton, *Quarter Sessions from Queen Elizabeth to Queen Anne*, London, 1878. The agricultural rates are identical with those in the above assessments from 1702 on, with the exception of beating, which is omitted.

<sup>2</sup> A 1s.4d. rate is introduced into the assessment in 1732, but it is possible that it is a mistake. In 1732 1s.2d. "without meat and drink," and 1s.4d. "if he finds himself" are both given. In 1733 1s.4d. "without meat and drink" is given, but in 1740 1s.2d. "if he finds himself" reappears. Since the 1732 assessment is obviously a bad copy of a previous one, the mowing rate may have been mixed with the beating rate. There is only one other change in the 1732 assessments, and none in that for 1733, and it is probable that this is not a change in rate but a slip of the copyist. It was typical of the eighteenth century disregard of wage assessments to issue them year after year as a matter of form. (See Lipson, *Economic History of England*, vol. III, pp. 263 ff.)

## Corn Harvest

4d.	with meat and drink for entire period
7d.	without meat and drink, 1700-1
6d.	" " " " 1702
8d.	" " " " 1703-1753

## Reaping

8d.	with meat and drink, 1700-1
6d.	" " " " 1702-1778
10d.	without meat and drink, 1700-1
12d.	" " " " 1702-1778

Again it is obvious that the 1794-6 rates for Devonshire show little change from those quoted above from 1700 on. The general money wage was at both times 1s. per day. But according to the assessment, that rate included no food or drink. Actually drink was always given in addition and food as well at harvest or hay. Although our evidence applies to the end of the century, there is no reason to think that the custom was not adhered to earlier. The same seems true of women's wages; 8d., 10d., or 1s. were the current as well as the assessed rates, but in practice they were undoubtedly given food or drink or both in addition.

An early eighteenth century assessment for Oxfordshire turned up in the Sessions Bundles. It is headed Easter 1701, and the daily agricultural wages are given as follows:<sup>1</sup>

Mower finding himself a day	1s.4d.
Reaper with meat and drink a day	1s.
Reaper finding himself a day	1s.6d.
Maids for the same work with meat and drink	6d.
Maids for the same work finding herself a day	10d.
Laborer's wage for making of Hay and racking of barley a day	10d.
A woman's wages for the same work a day	6d.
Taskers and all other Day Laborers from the first day of November to the first of February yearly	8d.
All such Laborers after the Same-time to Harvest a day	9d.

Comparing these rates with the 1769 and 1771 figures for Oxfordshire, it is apparent that wages had risen to some small extent over the 68 years. The mowing rate is the same at both dates, but "hay" rates had risen from 10d. to 1s.2d. to 1s.6d. in 1771. The winter rate had gone up from 8d. to 10d. or 1s. in 1769.

<sup>1</sup> *Oxford Quarter Sessions Bundles*, Easter, 1701. Annual wages of farm servants and building trade wages are given as well.



There is, indeed, more evidence of a rise in agricultural wages from this comparison than we have found in either of the two previous cases.

In the case of building trade wages, the assessed rates have been found in various instances to be lower than the rates prevailing in the market,<sup>1</sup> but agricultural wages do not appear to have deviated greatly from the assessments. It is to be expected that agricultural wages would change more slowly than those in industry, and it is possible, too, that they were more easily controlled through the assessments.

The question of drink was peculiarly important in the West, for, as we have seen, beer and cider were extensively given in place of higher money wages. Marshall said: "Their wages are very low, in *money*; being only 1s. a day. But in *drink*, shamefully exorbitant. Six quarts a day the common allowance: frequently two gallons: sometimes nine or ten quarts; or an unlimited quantity."<sup>2</sup> Marshall was here referring to Gloucestershire, and may very well have exaggerated the amount of cider drunk. Certainly in Devonshire the allowance was not usually anywhere nearly as much, being a quart to three pints ordinarily, although at harvest-time the laborer could drink as much as he could hold.<sup>3</sup> Marshall goes on to recount stories of the drinking exploits of the laborers, and the huge amount of cider they could toss off at a swallow. Turner commented in 1794 on the extravagant cider allowance and its demoralizing effects, adding that farmers were trying to rectify the situation by advancing money wages and curtailing the drink.<sup>4</sup> Latimer remarked on the "great consumption of malt liquor" by the working classes in 1700, and said that it was still "prodigious" in 1741 and 1742.<sup>5</sup> Generally overhours were recompensed by beer.<sup>6</sup> According to Vancouver,<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See article in July 1928 *English Historical Review*, previously referred to.

<sup>2</sup> Marshall, *Op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 52.

<sup>3</sup> Vancouver, p. 361.

<sup>4</sup> Turner, *Op. cit.*, p. 44.

<sup>5</sup> Latimer, John, *Annals of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century*, London, 1893, pp. 16, 235.

<sup>6</sup> Turner, *Op. cit.*, p. 20.

<sup>7</sup> Vancouver, p. 145.



"the reaping and harvesting of wheat (in Devon) is attended with so heavy an expense and with practices of so disorderly a nature, as to call for the strongest mark of disapprobation, . . ." These laborers received no wages except an invitation to the farmer's house to join in a harvest frolic, and at Christmas the freedom of the farmer's house, which was kept open day and night to the guests.

Probably farmers persisted in paying wages largely in beer and cider because these beverages were home made and cheaper than the monetary equivalent. It is probable, too, that up to a point the laborers were excited to harder work by the mildly intoxicating stimulants, and more dependent on their employers than if they were paid entirely in money.<sup>1</sup> On the whole they were less likely to become troublesome by demanding higher wages, or "apeing their betters," under such a system.<sup>2</sup> Whether or not this train of thought was conscious on the part of the farmers, the western agricultural laborers remained throughout the century in a condition distinctly inferior to that of similar laborers in other sections of the country. A more detailed examination of the state of the working class will be undertaken in the section on real wages. Before that point is reached, it is essential to analyze more data on wages.

### WAGES IN THE BUILDING TRADES

The most extensive and continuous figures for the payment of the wages of the general laborer are those derived from bills itemizing work on bridges, buildings, and roads, which are preserved in county Sessions Rolls or in the accounts of town Chamberlains or Receivers. Some Churchwardens' accounts are also of value, but usually they contain few wage figures. All of these sources have been used in compiling the wage series for the building trades, which are presented in this section. The figures are comparable in all respects to those derived from similar data used in the first section for London, Kent and Surrey. The rates

<sup>1</sup> See Lipson's excellent discussion of the "truck" payment of wages, of which the above is an example, in *Economic History of England*, vol. III, p. 277.

<sup>2</sup> See Marshall's comments on his own experiences.

taken from the bills are, as previously, daily wage rates. The figures are fairly continuous from 1700 to 1790, and the general stability of wages, which we observed in the London area, is not contradicted by the data for the West, so that interpolation is feasible. From the charts the course of various types of wages may be noted, all for the building trades. Medians have been used wherever three or more cases occurred in a single year.<sup>1</sup>

The Oxford wages presented in the accompanying charts (9, 10, 11) are made up of data secured from the Sessions Bundles, and from the records of St. John's College.<sup>2</sup> The data secured from the Sessions records extend from 1700 to 1780; that from St. John's College from 1736 to 1791. The Sessions material was separated into Oxford rates and rates paid outside of Oxford, and the former set of figures combined with the St. John's series. Simple medians were taken of all the figures quoted for laborers, of whatever craft. The result, as shown in the chart (9), indicates that the rate paid to general labor in the city of Oxford was 1s.2d. per day, practically without a break until 1770. From 1770 to 1778 the wage began to rise and in 1778 became 1s.4d., at which point it continued until 1791. It is to be noted, first, that the drop of the median in the '40's is due to the influence upon the median of the rates paid to plasterer's and slater's labor at St. John's. There wages were 1s. from 1741 to 1753 (they are not quoted previously), when they became 1s.2d., the usual rate

<sup>1</sup> See statistical appendix for discussion. It may be observed briefly here, however, that the median may be dominated by regional differences within a county, due to the lack of continuous data for single towns, or by qualitative changes in the nature of the work, especially in the case of the craftsmen. But these variations, as the charts show, are within fairly narrow ranges.

<sup>2</sup> The Quarter Sessions Bundles of Oxfordshire are kept at the County Hall, Oxford. Their use is made extraordinarily simple by a detailed index of the contents of each bundle. Up to 1730, each bundle which, according to the index, contained bills of any sort was examined. Since it was found that the rates paid showed no change during this thirty year period, the bundles were sampled for the remainder of the century. The samples of the later period indicated no change in rate, so that it is undoubtedly safe to assume a continuous rate of 1s.2d. from 1700 to 1780. The St. John's College records are the actual bills for repairs to the college, preserved and filed in big envelopes. I was given access to these records through the kindness of Gavin Bone, Esq., the librarian. All the bills for masons and plasterers were examined for the eighteenth century; carpenters' bills were sampled. The account books for Bagley Wood were examined, but yielded few wages.

paid to mason's labor. Oddly enough, the few items for slater's labor taken from the Sessions records show a rate of 1s.2d. as early as 1705, which continued through the period for which the St. John's rate was 1s. The point is, of course, that the deviations from the usual rate of 1s.2d. may be dismissed as due to the influence of a special circumstance in one trade at St. John's,

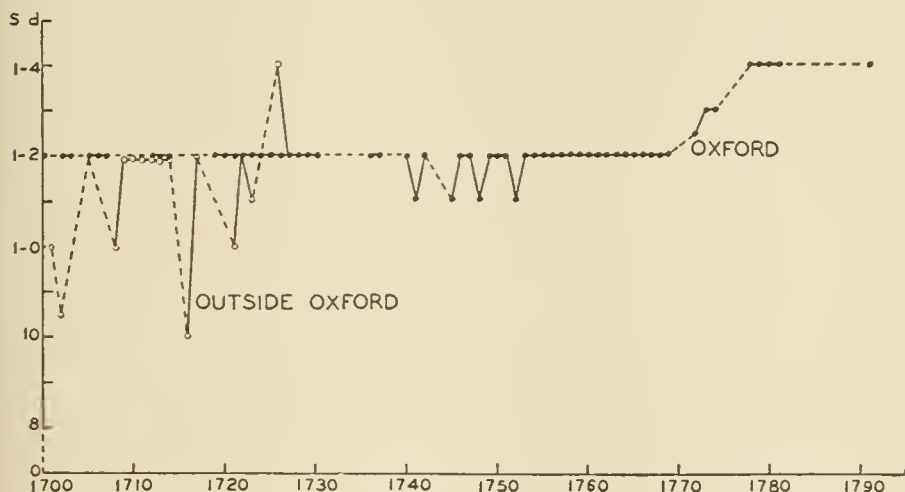


CHART 9—LABORERS' WAGES AT OXFORD

which influences the median because of an insufficient number of cases.

The same cannot be said of the rise which occurred in the seventies. Although the Sessions data do not show it, the rates for mason's, plasterer's and slater's, and gardener's labor all partake of this increase at St. John's. Possibly the county rates lagged behind the college rates. In any case we have no figures after 1780 for the county, but as the two sources have shown a fair correspondence of wages during the rest of the century, it seems reasonable to assume that the rise at the college would be followed by a similar rise in the county rates. Whatever may be the conjecture, however, the fact remains that the county wages remained constant at 1s.2d. until 1780, whereas the St. John's rates rose to 1s.4d. from 1770 to 1778.

There are only a few figures for wages paid outside the city of Oxford. These scattered rates are given on the same chart as the

median of the city wages. Most of the figures are for the first twenty years of the century and suggest that outside of Oxford the wages were apt to be twopence or, in some cases, even fourpence lower. The lowest rate given is that for Howard Causeway 8d. in 1702 — but the location of Howard Causeway is not given on the bill. The rest of the places mentioned are all southeast of Oxford within a range of five to ten miles. Several rates are given for Chislehampton: 1s. in 1702, 1s.2d. in 1714, and 1s.4d. in 1726. The latter rate is very probably for a higher quality of work, as the general laborer's wage had in no other case risen as high in the twenties. Ichford starts at 1s. in 1701 and is 1s.2d. by 1717. Dorchester is 10d. in 1716, but 1s.2d. in 1769. Thame is 1s. in 1721. As far as one can judge from these very scattered data, the area southeast of Oxford paid lower wages at the beginning of the century, but the differences tended to disappear by the twenties. It is of some interest to note that Dorchester Bridge, for which 10d. is quoted in 1716, and Thame, which paid 1s. in 1721, are farthest away from Oxford. However, no clear cut conclusion as to regional divergence can be drawn from these data.

The two charts (10 and 11) of Oxfordshire craftsmen's wages picture the median of all the crafts and their general tendency for Oxford, and also the scattered data for towns outside of Oxford. Chart 10 shows the daily rates for the three crafts examined, again for the city of Oxford. We shall begin with the individual crafts. Mason's wages were 1s.8d. per day until 1719. In the twenties and thirties they jumped about within a range of 1s.6d. and 2s. From 1736 to 1774 they were constant at 2s., rising in 1778 to 2s.4d., at which level they remained till the end of our data, 1781. The quotations for carpenters', plasterers' and slaters' wages are less numerous. Carpenters were paid 1s.8d. until 1725. From then until 1755, they fluctuated between 1s.6d. and 2s., but for the most part around 1s.10d. From 1755 to 1774 they were 2s., in 1779 went up to 2s.2d., only to return to 2s. in 1780. The wages of plasterers and slaters followed the carpenters until 1725. After that, until 1755, they fluctuated within the same range as the carpenters, but more about 1s.6d.

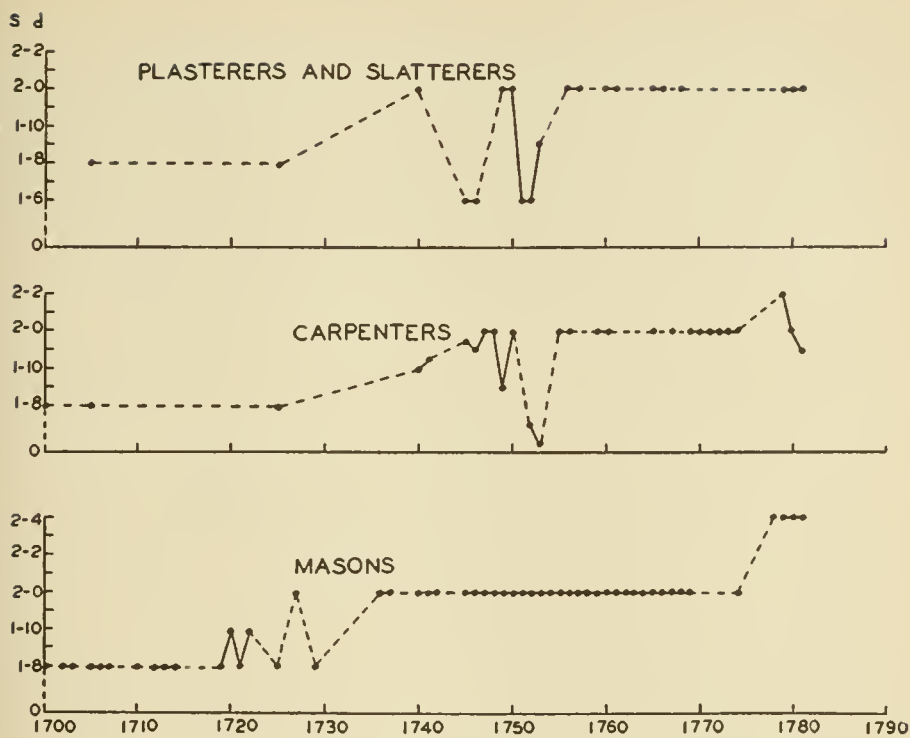


CHART 10—CRAFTSMEN'S WAGES AT OXFORD

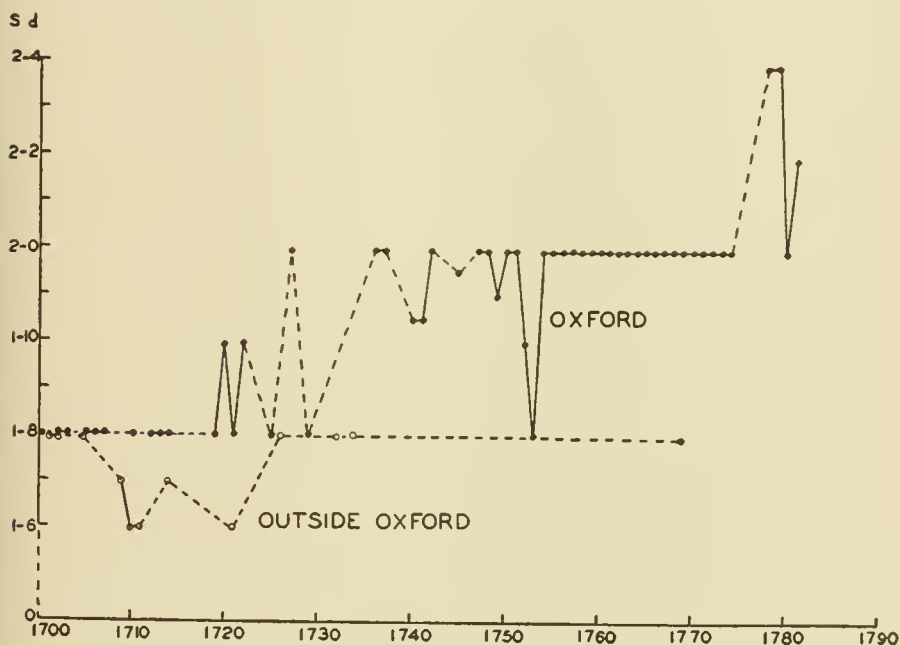


CHART 11—MEDIAN WAGES OF CRAFTSMEN AT OXFORD



than any other rate. The rate from 1755 to 1780 was 2s. The drop of the plasterers' wages to the 1s.6d. level in the thirties and forties is due to the same cause as the 1s. rate for labor during that same period. For some unknown reason St. John's paid plasterers and their laborers twopence less than the other crafts, and what is more, twopence less than the same craftsmen and



CHART 12—MEDIAN WAGES OF LABOR IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

laborers were paid by the county. The other variations in the wages for each craft are probably due to differences in the quality of the work which were not indicated by the bills.

It is apparent that the masons' wages led the rise which eventually affected each craft. All the crafts were clearly 1s.8d. for the first twenty years of the century, and 2s. from 1755 to 1779, as the median in Chart 11 shows. From 1720 to 1755 was a period of change. The masons' wages were 2s. from 1736 on, but the other crafts varied, within a range extending from 1s.6d. to 2s. if the rates for each craft separately are taken. The median narrows the range, 1s.8d. to 2s. from 1720 to 1735, and 1s.10½d. to 2s. from 1735 to 1755, with a tendency to vary around 2s.

The wages of master craftsmen were frequently a good deal more than those of the journeymen, although the distinction be-

tween journeymen and masters had become less marked by the eighteenth century. The rates which appeared to apply to master craftsmen were omitted in the preceding figures for the crafts. The Oxford data quoted few rates for master craftsmen and those were in the county bills. Master masons and carpenters were paid 1s.8d. in 1700, and by 1714 a master mason received 2s. Later in the century the few master's rates are still 2s., the same, in fact, as the journeymen's.

A few rates for towns outside of Oxford are charted on the diagram. It will be observed that they vary between 1s.6d. and 1s.8d. until 1725, and are then 1s.8d. until 1769. Apparently journeymen were paid anywhere from twopence to fourpence less in towns southeast of the city of Oxford. This is consistent with our observations concerning similar regional differences for laborers' wages. The same difference, both for laborers and craftsmen is observed in wages paid at Islip Bridge.<sup>1</sup> The laborers' rates were consistently 1s. from 1700 to 1769, with the exception of 1753 and 1754 when they dropped to 11d. The craftsmen (masons and carpenters who were paid exactly the same) received 1s.6d. throughout the period, except for a recession to 1s.4d. from 1749 to 1753.

In Gloucestershire we were unable to secure any wage rates before 1736. The earlier Sessions records had been destroyed by fire and neither the Cathedral nor the town records could fill out the empty period.<sup>2</sup> The median wage for laborers is charted in the accompanying diagram (12). Up to 1760 the rate fluctuated between 10d. and 1s.2d., the usual rate being 1s. From 1762 to 1771 the range of variation was between 1s. and 1s.2½d., perhaps 1s.1d. would be a fair approximation of the rate. 1s.2d. was the rate from 1773 to 1778, and after that the wage ranged between 1s.1d. and 1s.4d., varying mostly between 1s.2d. and

<sup>1</sup> From the Westminster Abbey Muniments.

<sup>2</sup> The Sessions records were used at the Sessions House, Gloucester. Through the courtesy of the very Reverend Henry Gee, Dean of Gloucester, I was enabled to use bills for repair of the Cathedral. The Chamberlain's Accounts, at the Guildhall, Gloucester, yielded a few rates for common labor, but most of the bills for repairs were listed as lump sums, and the original itemized bills could not be found. Probably they had been destroyed.

1s.3d. Obviously there was very little increase in laborers' wages over this period. At the most they rose from 1s. to 1s.3d., and in many places there was no rise at all.

The median of craftsmen's wages exhibits a much lower level than we noticed in Oxfordshire (see Chart 13). Bricklayers were the highest paid, their wage being 1s.8d. from 1741 to 1764, and 1s.10d. from then to 1784. Carpenters received 1s.6d. in the forties, and 1s.8d. from 1756 to 1771. The last two points, 1782 and 1784, indicate a rate of 1s.10d. Contrary to the situation in Oxford, the lowest rates are for masons. Their wage varied



CHART 13—MEDIAN WAGES OF CRAFTSMEN IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

between 1s.4d. and 1s.6d. from 1733 to 1770. During the seventies it went up to 1s.6d. where it remained until the eighties, and then rose to 1s.10d. The scattered Cathedral figures for each craft were plotted on each chart in order to find out whether there was a difference in the rates paid by the Cathedral and the county. In all these crafts there was no difference until the eighties, when the Cathedral rate was uniformly twopence higher. The divergence may have been due to a difference in the quality of the work, or to the influence of smaller places on the county median.

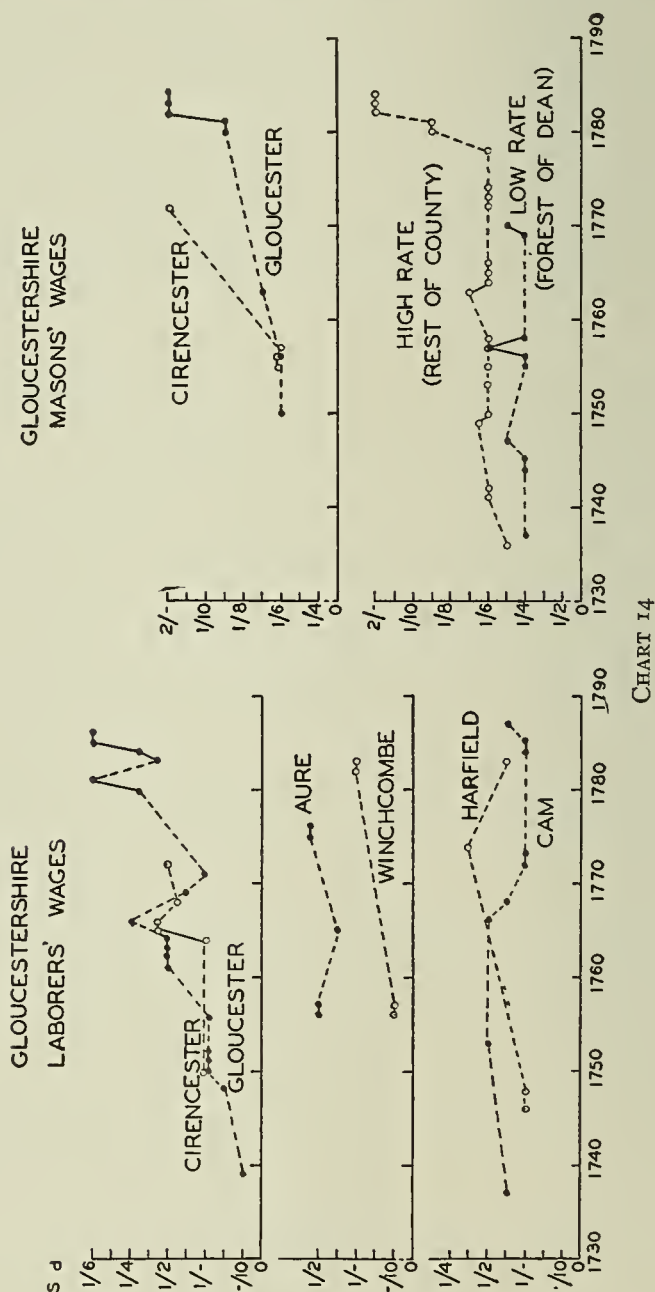
The median of all the crafts (Chart 13) exhibits considerable fluctuations, which is not surprising, since it is influenced not only by regional variation, but by differences among the three crafts.

Roughly the general tendency may be said to be: 1s.5d. in the thirties, 1s.6d. from 1740 to 1755, 1s.8d. thereafter until 1780, and 1s.11d. in the eighties. A rising trend of wages is evident, as was not true in the case of the laborers' rates. Even so, it was not until the eighties that Gloucester craftsmen attained the wage level that had been held in Oxford from 1755 on. Master craftsmen in Gloucester received the usual wage of the Oxford journeyman, 2s. (within a range of 1s.10d. to 2s.2d.) for the most part from 1755 on. Some of the craftsmen at the Cathedral, doubtless of special skill, received as much as 2s.4d., and in one case, 3s.

Over seventy towns are represented by one or more rates in the medians. For most of them there is only one quotation, so that it is impossible to derive geographical series. The data were, however, tested for the existence of regional differences. All those towns for which a rate of 10d. or below for laborers' wages was quoted once or more, were grouped together. They were then grouped together geographically, but without any conclusive results. There were 22 towns in the "low rate" group; 7 of them were in the Cotswolds, 3 in the Vale of Berkeley, 2 in the Forest of Dean, 5 in the Vale of Gloucester, and 1 in the Stroud Valley. In other words, the payment of the low rates was spread all over the county, with perhaps a slight concentration in the Cotswolds; 16 Cotswold villages were represented in the whole series, and nearly half of these paid low wages. It will be remembered that the Cotswold agricultural wages were slightly lower than those for other districts in Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire. However, the general diversity of the 10d. rate suggests that it may have been a rate paid to less skilled labor, for, although every effort was made to eliminate qualitative differences, that was frequently not possible. Such an inference is substantiated by the fact, as may be seen in Chart 14, that the Gloucester series, which included the highest rates paid, includes a 10d. rate. The best series for separate localities are also sketched in Chart 14.

Regional differentiation was somewhat more successful in the case of craftsmen. The masons' series, the least scattered of any craft series, was subjected to a similar test. All those towns for

which a rate of 1s.4d. was quoted for masons' wages were grouped together. There were 9 such towns, 5 of which were in the



Forest of Dean, 2 in the Vale of Gloucester, and 1 each in the Vale of Berkeley and the Cotswolds. Quite obviously the low



rates were concentrated in the Forest of Dean, especially as these 5 towns were the only ones in the Forest of Dean for which masons' wages were given. Chart 14 shows that the low rate series was consistently twopence under the rates paid in the rest of the county. It is also clear that these low rates dominate the masons' series for the county (see Chart 13).

Some figures quoted by Thorold Rogers<sup>1</sup> for Guiting, in the Cotswolds, are of distinct interest in connection with the attempt to isolate districts which paid a low rate. The chart (15) shows

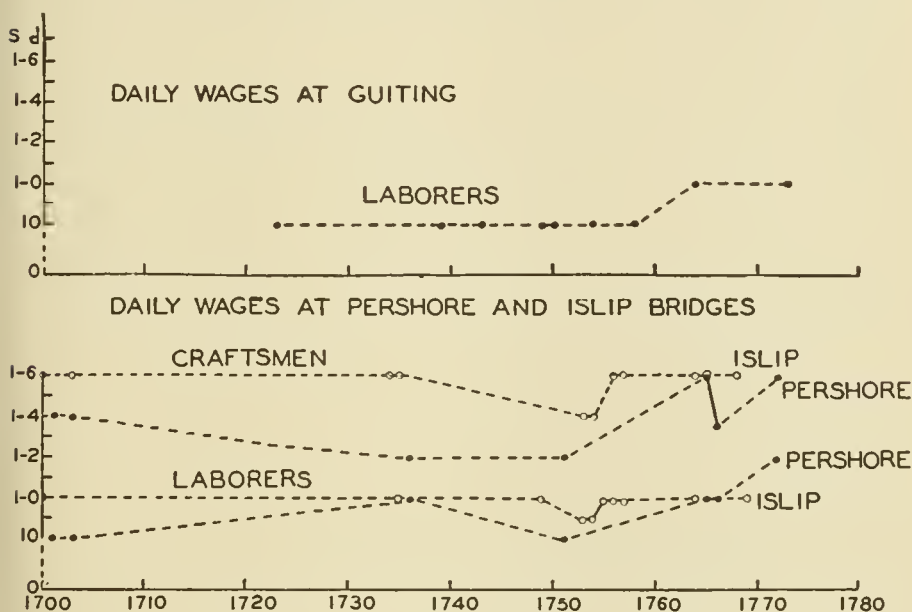


CHART 15

that the Guiting figures were fairly continuous from 1723 to 1792. The laborers are described as hedging and working on the roads, there being apparently no difference in rate for the two kinds of work. They are quite evidently the same type of general laborer with which we are dealing in the Sessions bills. At Guiting wages were 10d. a day without a break until the early sixties. In 1764 the rate went up to 1s. a day and continued at that figure for the rest of the period. This is further indication not only of the general stability of Gloucestershire wages, but of the theory that

<sup>1</sup> *History of Agriculture and Prices*, vol. VII, pp. 493-528.

the Cotswolds were possibly a low rate area as far as the wages of laborers are concerned. In the above analysis the Cotswolds included the greatest proportion (throughout more than a third) of the towns paying low wages, and the Guiting wages are also low. It is also worthy of note that the only rise in wages which took place in Guiting occurred at the same time as the rise which appears in the median wages for the county — namely 1763 or 1764. There are a few scattered figures of craftsmen's wages at Guiting, as well. In 1746 a rate of 1s.8d. is given, in 1749 1s.5d., both of which rates are within the range of those taken from the Sessions records.

Wages at Pershore, on the borders of Gloucestershire and Worcestershire, also were comparable to Gloucestershire rates. Laborers are listed as receiving 10d. from 1701 to 1703, 1s. in 1736, and 10d. again in 1751. In 1755 and 1766 the rate was again 1s. and rose to 1s.2d. in 1772.<sup>1</sup> (See Chart 15.) Masons' wages at Pershore varied, for the most part, between 1s.4d. and 1s.6d. from 1701 to 1772, thus indicating that Pershore was under the influence of the Forest of Dean level of wages. Pershore was near the Forest and may very well have been so influenced. (See Chart 15.)

We were not able to find any satisfactory continuous wage data for Bristol or Somerset. A number of sources yielded only very scattered figures. The Somerset Quarter Sessions Rolls contained no bills from which wages could be derived.<sup>2</sup> The Bristol<sup>3</sup> and Dunster<sup>4</sup> figures are given in Chart 16. The Bristol

<sup>1</sup> From the Westminster Abbey Muniments.

<sup>2</sup> At the Shire Hall, Taunton, in charge of St. George Gray, Esq. The rolls were sampled each year from 1700 to 1730, with no result. The remainder of the rolls were not examined, as the chances of finding any bills, when a thirty year period yielded none, seemed very slight. Their Disbursement Books for the 18th century were also looked at. They listed lump sum payments for repairs, but no details.

<sup>3</sup> The Bristol figures are taken from an Account Book of building an exchange and market place, in the Bristol Archives, kept at the Council House in charge of Miss Harding. The Petty Cash Books, which were also examined, gave nothing, and the Bristol Quarter Sessions Records, just recently found, were not available for use. Most of the information on Bristol wages came from the Christ Church Churchwarden's Accounts, which have been transcribed by Canon R. T. Cole, who was very obliging in allowing them to be used at his home.

<sup>4</sup> The private accounts of G. F. Luttrell, Esq. (referred to above), for work done about Dunster Castle, and also the Churchwarden's Accounts of East Quantoxhead were used.

figures extend from 1727 to 1789. From 1726 to 1755 the laborers' wages fluctuated from 1s. to 1s.2d., with the probability that the rate was 1s.2d. by the late thirties. In the sixties it rose to 1s.4d., and varied in the eighties from 1s.3d. to 1s.6d. These figures are quite similar to the course of wages in Gloucester. As might be expected, the Dunster figures are below the Bristol figures by twopence at least. Dunster was a rural community

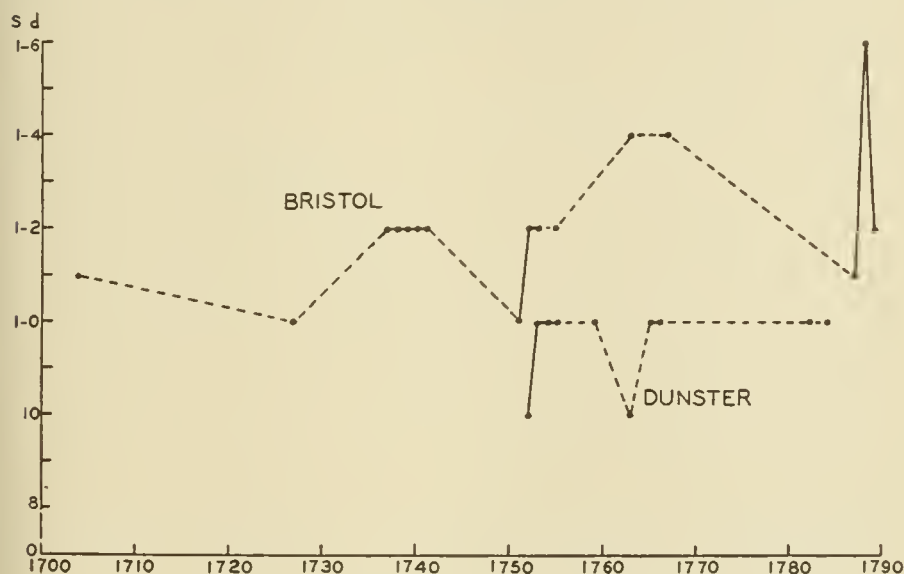


CHART 16—LABORERS' WAGES IN SOMERSETSHIRE

and would naturally not be able to equal the rates paid in a thriving commercial town. The Dunster wages varied between 10d. and 1s., being 1s. steadily from 1765 to the end of our data, 1784. Although we have no information concerning the perquisites, except drink, for which many items are listed on the bills, accruing to the laborers connected with Dunster Castle, the presumption is that they were given land or low rents, or low prices on grain and meats, and generally looked after in a paternal fashion. Such was the custom in the West, and, indeed, in the North.

Considerably more difference existed between the craftsmen's wages in Bristol and Dunster. Our figures start at a rate of 1s.10d. in 1739 for Bristol. By the sixties the wage had risen to

2s., and in the later eighties it was as high as 2s.4d., though this may have been a difference in skill. (See Chart 17.) Rates quoted by Latimer for masons and carpenters are consistent with those given above; 1s.8d. for masons and carpenters in 1704, and 1s.10d. for carpenters in 1747.<sup>1</sup> In 1766, Latimer records from the *Bristol Journal* the fact that the journeymen sent a petition to the Master of the Company demanding 12s. a week or 2s. a day.

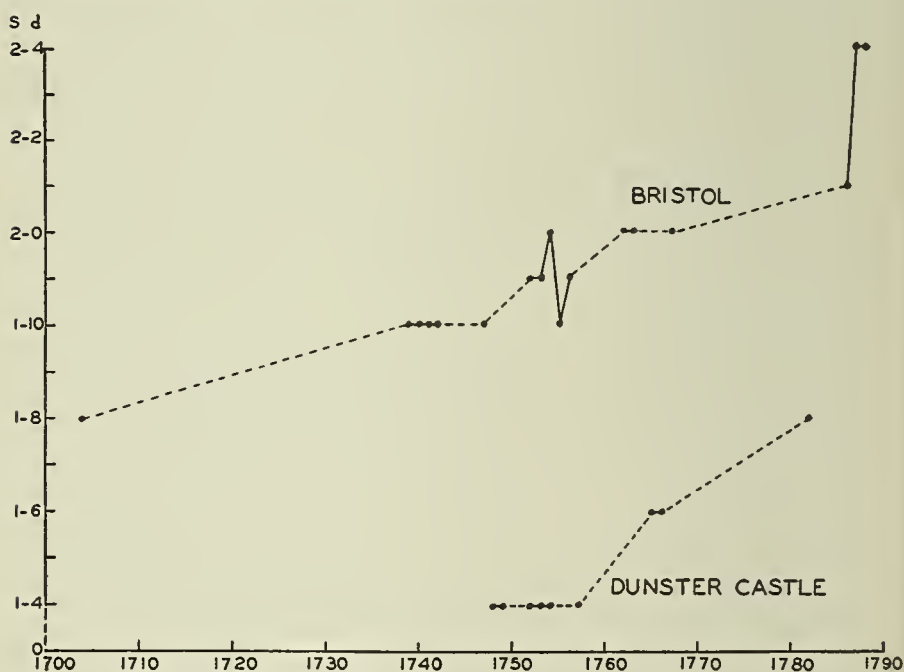


CHART 17—CRAFTSMENS' WAGES IN SOMERSETSHIRE

The Company resolved, however, that "every master should pay them according to what they earned or deserved and no more . . ."<sup>2</sup> As far as master craftsmen are concerned, the

<sup>1</sup> *Annals of Bristol*, 1893, pp. 59, 268.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Two 17th century ordinances of the Carpenters' and Masons' Companies, which were found in the Bristol Order Books, are of interest in this connection. Among the rules of the Company of Carpenters in 1665, is the following:

"Itt is Ordered Ordained and Established that the rates of Wages shall be as followeth and noe other (viz—) that noe Mast<sup>r</sup> Workman shall have above two shillings a day and noe Journeymen and Eldest Apprentice shall have above twenty pence a day noe other Apprentice above sixteene pence a day and every Journeyman and Apprentice shall be att worke betweene five and six of the Clock in the Morning and worke untill Seaven of the Clock att night. (Breakfast and dinner by me

Bristol rates were 2s. from 1725 to 1740. From then on they varied around 2s.6d., in some cases even going as high as 3s. (See Chart 18.)

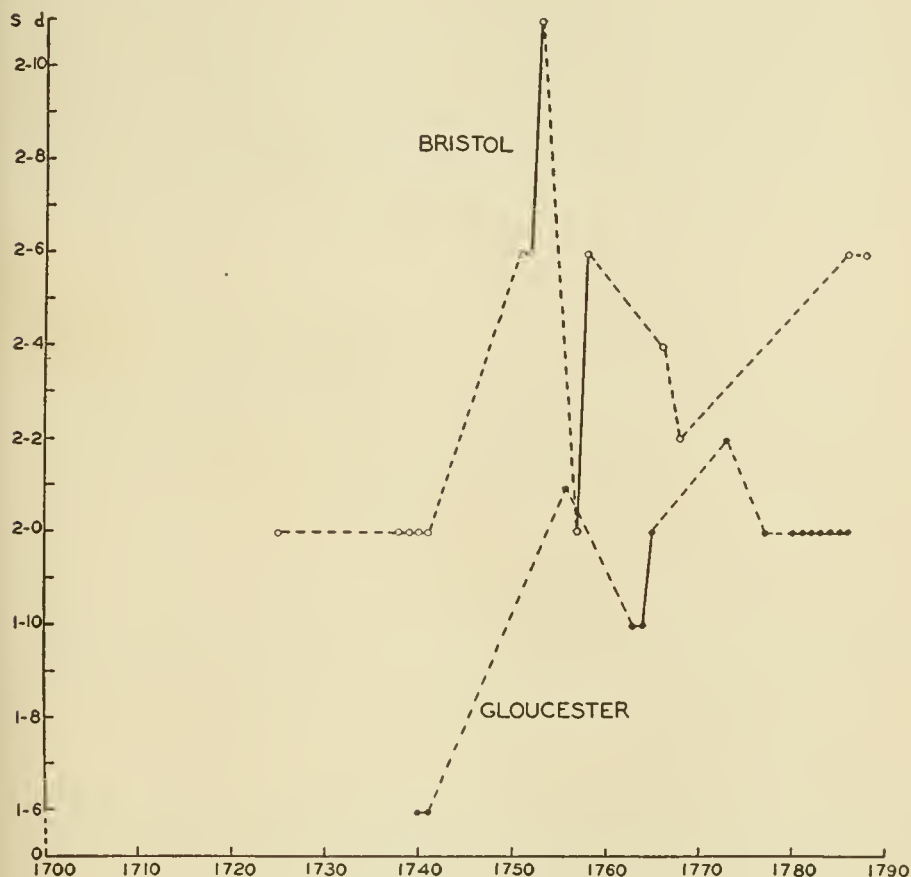


CHART 18—MEDIAN WAGES OF MASTER CRAFTSMEN

Craftsmen's wages at Dunster Castle were low, corresponding

only Excepted) And for that the taking of Tobacco during the tyme of worke as the Occasioning of Much Idleness and many tymes dangerous in respect of fire Itt is therefore Ordered that noe Work man whatsoever Shall presume to take any Tobacco durement the tyme aforesaid. . . ."

The chief interest of this ordinance lies in the fact that the 2s. and 1s.8d. rates for wages set here were still in force in the eighteenth century, certainly in the first decade and possibly later. An ordinance of the "Company of Rough Masons, Bricklayers, Paviers, and Hard hewers" for 1672 vests the power to fix wages in the hands of the "Mayor and Aldermen his Majesties Justices of Peace," and further ordained that any other rates would be void. But it is not likely that the actual wages paid followed the assessed rates in the 18th century.



to the rates paid masons in the Forest of Dean. From 1748 to 1752 the wage was 1s.4d., 1s.6d. in 1765 and 1766, and 1s.8d. in 1782. Dunster was undoubtedly a low rate area for both laborers and craftsmen.

The last section of the West with which we are concerned is the county of Devon. The wage data, gathered from both town and county sources are extremely full.<sup>1</sup> Laborers' wages for Exeter are exhibited on Chart 19. It is apparent that the rates were

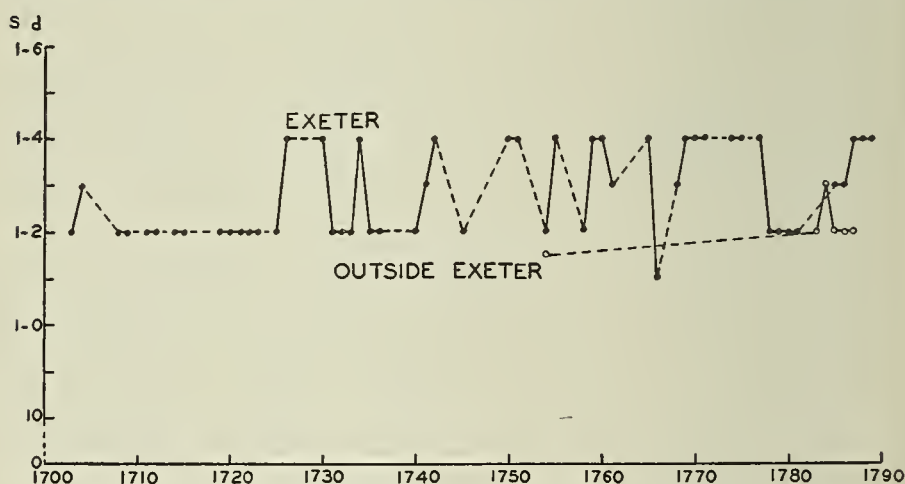


CHART 19—MEDIAN WAGES OF LABOR IN EXETER

extremely stable, the range extending from 1s.2d. to 1s.4d. Examination of the individual items which make up the median make it clear that this range existed, for laborers of all crafts,

<sup>1</sup> The most complete series were taken from the Receiver's Vouchers of Exeter, kept in the Exeter Public Library under the care of W. A. Gay, Esq. Mr. Gay was extraordinarily helpful during the weeks in which I was using the records. The Quarter Sessions Records, in the "Castle" now the County Hall, were also placed at my disposal through the kindness of B. S. Miller, Esq., Clerk of the Peace, and his assistant D. C. Jones, Esq. The few Quarter Sessions Files which were examined were devoid of bills, but a pile of County Vouchers were finally located in the basement. Eighteenth and nineteenth century bills of all varieties were packed together hit or miss on dirty shelves. In these vouchers, a number of eighteenth century rates were discovered.

The Receiver's Vouchers were sampled, as the mass of material contained in them was superabundant, and the rates, especially for laborers changed very little from sample to sample. Bundles were examined every 3 or 4 years, and since each bundle frequently contained bills for work done 2 or 3 years previously as well, the period was quite well covered.

during the century. Both rates, 1s.2d. and 1s.4d., occur at the beginning as well as at the end of the century. All that can be said is that the 1s.2d. rate was more prevalent at the beginning of the century; 1s.4d. at the end of the period. Not until the late twenties was a wage of 1s.4d. sufficiently general to influence the median. And not until the forties was 1s.4d. a characteristic median rate. The general tendency shows a wage of 1s.2d. from 1703 to 1740, and a rate of 1s.4d. from 1741 to 1790.

The journeymen's wages for Exeter show considerable diversity.<sup>1</sup> (Chart 20.) The range in most cases was from 1s.8d. to

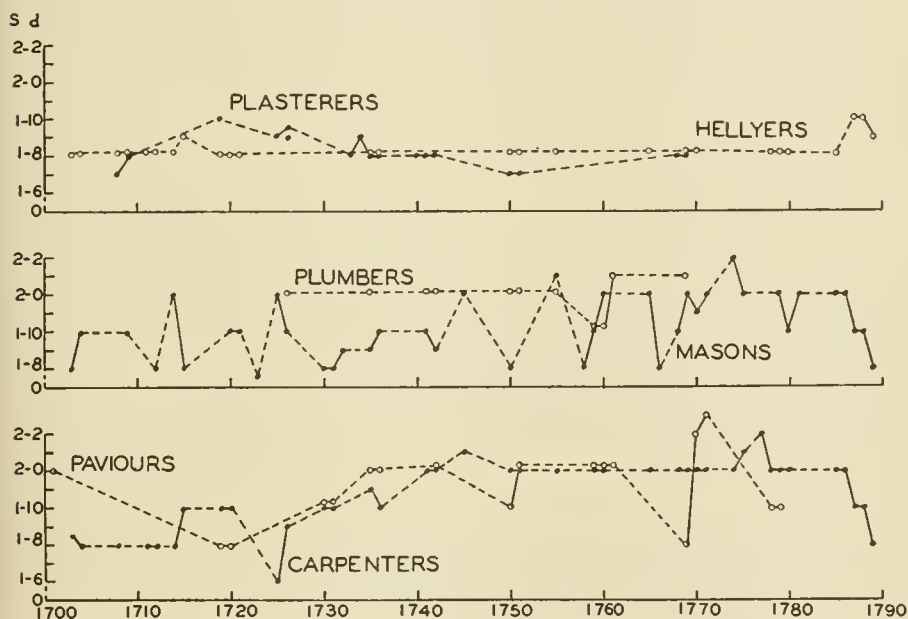


CHART 20—CRAFTSMEN'S WAGES IN EXETER

2s., although pavioirs' wages went up to 2s.3d., and carpenters' wages down to 1s.6d. The plumbers may be called the high rate craft, as they were almost continuously at a wage level of 2s. from 1726 to 1770. The pavioirs and carpenters were also in this class. Carpenters' rates were 1s.8d. until 1714, went up to 1s.10d. in 1715, and to 2s. in 1741 where they remained until 1790. The pavioirs' rates were 1s.8d. as late as 1720, but they had attained

<sup>1</sup> Part of the lack of continuity of the data is due to the fact that the Exeter Receivers' Vouchers were sampled. See *supra*, footnote.

2s. by 1735. There was greater deviation in their rates from then on, as the median went down to 1s.8d. again and up to 2s.3d. within three years. The series of masons' wages is rather in the middle of the range. Masons' wages varied for the most part between 1s.8d. and 1s.10d. until 1760. From then on they were 2s. fairly continuously, except for a recession at the end of the period. The two distinctly low rate crafts are the hellyers (tilers) and the plasterers. The hellyers' wages remained at 1s.8d. until 1780, when they went up by degrees to 1s.11d. Plasterers' rates varied about the 1s.8d. level, although they attained 1s.10d. once in 1719. Many of these deviations within a craft must be due to qualitative differences in the work, for it is impossible to eliminate them entirely by the evidence contained in the vouchers.

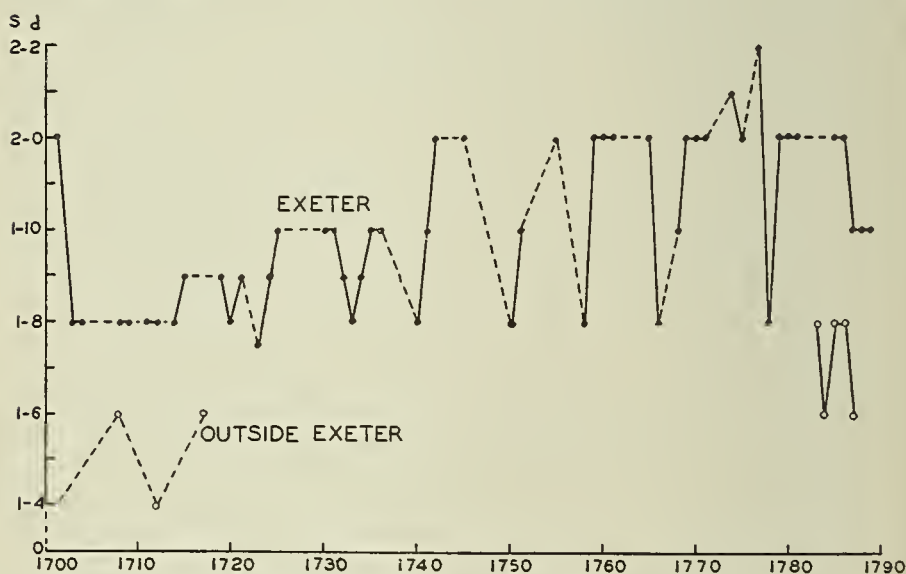


CHART 21—MEDIAN WAGES OF CRAFTSMEN

The median of the craftsmen's wages is shown on Chart 21. Its variations are due not only to the qualitative elements just mentioned, but to the uneven effects of the different crafts. A graphically determined general tendency is based on a study of the individual series for each craft. There is no doubt that it is correct to represent the wage for the period from 1703 to 1714 as 1s.8d., and as 2s. from 1760 to 1790. It is during the

intervening period that the differences in the low and high rate crafts were most marked, each with its own moment of change. The levels selected show the median rate as being 1s.9d., 1715 to 1724, 1s.10d., 1725 to 1739, and 1s.11d., 1740 to 1760.

Exeter is the only place for which it was possible to procure continuous data upon master craftsmen. Usually only a few rates here and there can be certainly attributed to the most skilled workmen. On the Exeter vouchers they were designated as "myself" and their wages were definitely distinguishable from those of journeymen and apprentices. There is one characteris-

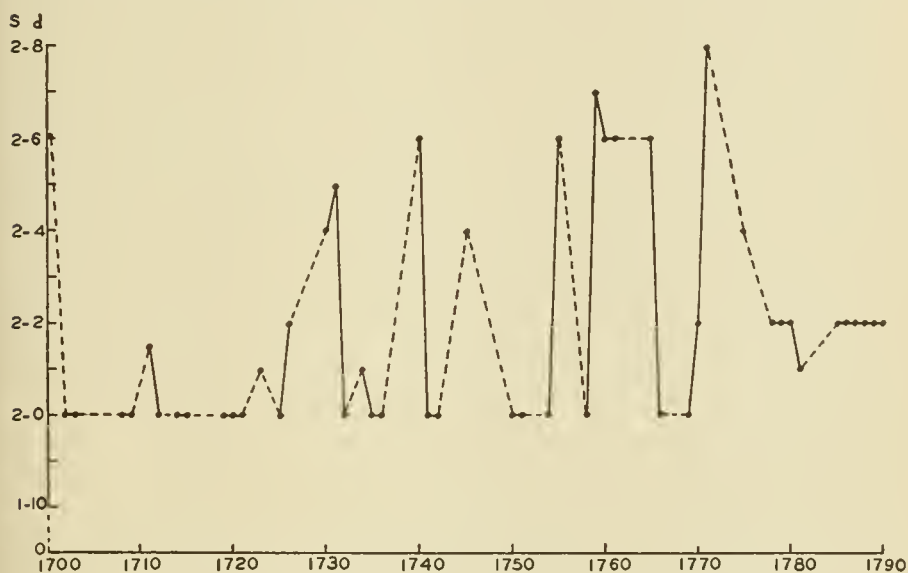


CHART 22—MEDIAN WAGES OF MASTER CRAFTSMEN AT EXETER

tic of masters' wages for all the crafts, namely, their basic rate was 2s., from 1703 until the late seventies. Frequently they deviated, but almost always in an upward direction. Master plumbers and carpenters were often paid 2s.6d. before 1740, and master paviors were paid that rate fairly continuously after 1760. It was not until 1740 or after that master masons reached the 2s.6d. class. The median of the master craftsmen shows even more strikingly the continuity of the 2s. level, with great peaks rising out of it here and there, presumably for jobs and men of special skill. (See Chart 22.)

Unfortunately there are only a few wage rates for places in Devon outside of Exeter, and these rates are for the latter half of the century. As far as laborers' wages are concerned they indicate some regional divergence, for the outside rates were 1s.2d. when the general Exeter wage was 1s.4d. Journeymen's wages showed a similar spread. Outside Exeter wages for journeymen were twopence to fourpence lower, and for masters' rates the difference was even greater, being as much as 5d. to 1s. As far as we can judge, the Exeter wages were distinctly higher for all types of work. In this respect they are like the wages of other cities we have examined, such as Oxford, Gloucester, and Bristol.

It is of some interest to compare the wage rates derived from various public and private accounts, which we have discussed, with the assessed rates for the building trades. According to the Oxfordshire Assessment of 1701,<sup>1</sup> "Plowwright, Carpenter, and Masons' Wages for the Winter finding themselves a day" was 1s., and for "the summer finding themselves a day" was also 1s. As is easily observed from the tables and charts, both journeymen masons and carpenters in Oxford were paid 1s.8d. a day in 1701 by the County. Outside of Oxford, the rate was less, 1s.6d. per day, but still 6d. above the assessed wage. The Gloucestershire Assessment of 1732<sup>2</sup> sets the wages of carpenters, wheelrights and masons at 1s.2d. per day without drink, and 1s. with drink. In 1733 the Gloucestershire mason was paid 1s.5d., and in 1734 1s.4d. per day. Carpenters were paid 1s.6d. in 1740. Again there is a discrepancy between the assessed and actual wage, although not as large as in the case of Oxfordshire.

The series of Devonshire assessments list rates to be paid to master masons, carpenters etc., and also to "masons, carpenters etc. not Masters".<sup>3</sup> They are as follows:

	1700-1753
Master masons, carpenters etc.	8d. per day with meat and drink
	1s.4d. per day without meat and drink

<sup>1</sup> *Oxford Quarter Sessions Bundle*, Easter, 1701.

<sup>2</sup> Rogers, Thorold, *History of Agriculture and Prices*, vol. 7, p. 623.

<sup>3</sup> For list of series see *supra*, p. 88. The full list of crafts included was mason, carpenter, hellyer, plasterer, or plumber, thatcher, taylor, shindler, joiner, cooper, pavyer.



	1778
	10d. per day with meat and drink
	1s.6d. per day without meat and drink
	1700-1778
Masons, carpenters etc. (not masters)	6d. per day with meat and drink
	12d. per day without meat and drink

It is not clear whether the last category refers to journeymen or to laborers. The rate is comparable to those to be paid masons and carpenters according to the Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire assessments, but the assessment itself, after listing the trades, states "or other laborers not being masters." If the rate is taken as applying to laborers, the assessed wage is 1s. without meat and drink as compared to the 1s.2d. and 1s.4d. wage actually paid. If the rate is compared with that actually paid to journeymen, there exists an even wider margin. We have seen how the crafts varied among themselves, in itself a deviation from the assessment which fixed the wage for all crafts the same. On the whole, the journeymen's wages in Exeter fluctuated from 1s.8d. to 2s. during the century, as contrasted with the 1s. rate set by the assessment. In the rest of Devon, the rate was lower, 1s.4d. to 1s.8d. It is probable that these "labourers" were really journeymen, since they would scarcely be termed masons etc. if they were not. In any case, the actual wage paid was above the assessed rate.

We find similar deviations in rate paid to the masters of each craft as in the case of the journeymen. On the whole, however, masters were paid a minimum of 2s. per day, without meat and drink, during the century in Exeter. The assessed rate was 1s.4d. per day, 1700 to 1753, and rose to 1s.6d. in 1778.<sup>1</sup> Outside of Exeter the scattered figures show a wage of 1s.6d. to 1s.8d. paid to master craftsmen from 1770 to 1787. This rate is considerably more in line with the assessed rates.

The comparison of current with assessed wage rates in the West, therefore, confirms our previous conclusion that the legal power of the Justices of the Peace to set wages was economically ineffective. In the building trades, at least, the actual wages paid

<sup>1</sup> Possibly the rise came before 1778, as no assessments could be found for the period between 1753 and 1778.

were considerably above those stated in the wage assessments. Especially in the cities, such as Oxford and Exeter, was the discrepancy large. Apparently particularly skilled workmen were able to demand and get a wage unrelated to the levels stated as maxima by the Justices.

In conclusion, certain general characteristics of money wages in the West of England may be noted. As far as laborers' wages are concerned, there was almost no tendency for the rates to increase during the century. For the most part a stable level was maintained, with an increase of twopence towards the end of the century. The cities of the western area exhibit a striking similarity of rates. Exeter and Oxford both vary between 1s.2d. and 1s.4d., the only difference being that the increase to 1s.4d. occurred about 1740 at Exeter, but not until the seventies in Oxford. The range of variation in Gloucester and Bristol was somewhat wider, and a rate of 1s. was paid in both cities until the middle of the century. Then a wage of 1s.2d. became current until the end of the period when 1s.4d. was frequently paid. In no case is there evidence of any marked increase in the money wages of the general laborer.

The craftsmen, however, were considerably better off. Taking the journeymen's wages as representative, it is obvious that a steady increase is noticeable throughout the century. The general tendency for the district ranges between 1s.8d. and 2s.2d., for the most part, although Gloucester starts at 1s.6d., and Bristol at 1s.10d. The two best series are for Oxford and Exeter. They show a very similar, if not an exact parallelism of movement. Beginning at 1s.8d. they rise to 1s.9d., 1s.10d., 1s.11d., and finally to 2s. The increases at Oxford were usually about five years in advance of those at Exeter, and by 1755, the Oxford rate had reached 2s.2d. It may be observed that the reverse was true of laborers' wages in the two cities; the Exeter rates rising first. In Gloucestershire there was a distinct lag, for craftsmen's wages were 1s.6d. until the fifties, and 1s.8d. until the eighties, when they suddenly jumped to 2s. The Bristol rates compare with those of Oxford and Exeter, starting at 1s.10d. in the forties,

rising gradually to 2s. by the sixties, and above that in the eighties.

For both laborers' and craftsmen's wages, regional differences within the West are manifest. The highest rates paid were in the cities of Exeter and Oxford, for both laborers and craftsmen. Bristol and Gloucester ranked next, with Gloucester considerably below any of the others, except for the very high wages paid to skilled craftsmen at the Cathedral, clearly an exception to the usual rate. Outside these cities the wages paid were consistently twopence to fourpence less, as the evidence from southeast Oxfordshire, Devonshire, Dunster, and Gloucestershire indicates. In Gloucestershire, for which we have the most complete county data, several centres of the low rates seem to be suggested. Possibly the Cotswolds were a low rate district for laborers' wages, and certainly the Forest of Dean paid a wage to masons twopence below the rate paid elsewhere in the county.

Each city, prominent commercially, economically, or socially, appears to have formed a nucleus of high wages for the district immediately round it. Small metropolitan areas, therefore, may be conceived as existing around Oxford and Exeter, for instance, in a similar manner to the district around London. In the strictly rural sections of the counties, however, the wage rate dropped twopence, in the West, although the movement of wages followed the course of the city rates. The difference in level of wages existing between the towns and the countryside may have been partly qualitative. The higher paid town workmen may well have been more skilled.

It is impossible to estimate the condition of labor in the West, despite the data on the money wages of unskilled and semi-skilled workers, without some knowledge of prices and supplementary earnings. In other words, the entire family income, in money and perquisites, must be compared with prices before any conclusions as to the movement of real wages can be reached. The next chapter will attempt this task.

## CHAPTER IV

### REAL WAGES

THE obstacles to the simple use of money wages, especially *daily* rates, as an indication of the standard of living of the groups of individuals receiving them, were put down in some detail in the first section, in connection with the analysis of wages in the London area.<sup>1</sup> The impossibility of estimating an accurate annual income on the basis of these daily wages is clear. However, there are data on the extent of unemployment and a few annual figures from other sources.

Some of the bills from which the daily wage figures were taken indicate the number of days worked by individuals employed on the job. For instance, in Franham, Gloucestershire, between July 19 and October 10, 1772, the laborers and craftsmen employed worked the following number of days:<sup>2</sup>

18	21½	9½
62	5	45½
65½	23½	4
83¾	25	2
98	19½	22½
37½	48½	10½
9	6	88¼
6	5	55½
6	21	

The largest number of days worked during these three months was 98; the smallest, 2. The arithmetic average is 29.8 days, or about a month for each man. Several of the men worked the entire three month period. Judging from the chance items in other bills, however, these averages are unusually good for a particular job. In 1775 in Bledsloe-in-Aure, men worked anywhere from 3 to 55 days a piece, generally about 20 to 25 days.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See above, chapter I.

<sup>2</sup> Bill for repair of roads at Franham, *Gloucestershire Sessions Rolls*, 1773.

<sup>3</sup> *Gloucestershire Sessions Rolls*, 1776.

Usually the number of days listed on the bills varies from 3 or 4, to perhaps 10. There is this to be said, however; the amount of repairs necessary to bridges and roads all over the country, due to the increased traffic, made essential continual work on some road or bridge.<sup>1</sup> It is quite probable that there was enough employment within a fairly small area to keep laborers at work to a large extent throughout the year.

The amount of employment of the men who built the new market place at Bristol was carefully listed. Several examples have been selected. Richard Flagg, a laborer, worked 16 $\frac{1}{4}$  days in November 1739, 9 in December, and 13 $\frac{3}{4}$  in February 1740. Another laborer, William Willicombe, was employed from April through September 1740, working 105 $\frac{1}{4}$  days during this six month period. Samuel Glascodine, the master craftsman in charge of the job, worked continuously from November 1739 to April 1741, with the exception of January and March 1740, and January 1741, or 281 days in all.<sup>2</sup> In 1740 he was employed, on this piece of work, 165 days, or approximately one half of the working year. As he worked at the rate of 2s. per day he received about £17 in 1740 from this job alone. Very probably he carried on other building at the same time. By 1786, according to Latimer, a "building mania" had begun in Clifton, a small town now part of Bristol, and within the next five years spread rapidly throughout the city.<sup>3</sup> Except for the vicissitudes of the weather, there appears to have been no reason why laborers and craftsmen in the building trades could not have had more or less regular employment if they so desired.

The annual earnings of a number of "hands employed in ordinary" at the naval arsenal in Plymouth can be derived from

<sup>1</sup> The Sessions rolls contain many requests from towns for assistance in the repair of bridges and roads. For instance, in 1700 the Surveyor of the Highways for Withypoole stated that Longacre bridge was out of repair and had previously been repaired with assistance of the county to the amount of £250. *Somerset Sessions Rolls*, 1700. The Surveyor of the Highways of Tawbor Bishop petitioned the Justices for permission to raise a rate to repair the highways by hiring a pavior. *Devon Quarter Sessions Files*, 1700.

<sup>2</sup> Account of Building . . . etc. *Bristol Archives*

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 493-4.



figures quoted by Vancouver.<sup>1</sup> These figures apply to the end of the eighteenth century.

House carpenters	£73-7-11 per annum
Masons	86-11-0 " "
Bricklayers	85-17-8 " "
Laborers	42-11-0 " "
Plumbers	105-18-3 " "
Bricklayers' Laborers	44-12-0 " "

Certainly the annual average income paid at the arsenal was much greater than the ordinary laborer or craftsman could hope to earn. Even a highly skilled person such as Glascodine could not earn more than £35 to £40 a year according to our figures. Even if the difference in time is fully accounted for, the above figures seem exceptionally liberal. The Exeter wage figures show little change in wage rates for labor during the century, and only a gradual rise, within the limits of 1s.8d. and 2s., for the craftsmen. On the basis of the Exeter wages paid to laborers, the maximum annual earnings of a laborer (assuming 300 working days a year and a rate of 1s.4d. per day) would have been £20. At the arsenal they were more than twice that amount. It may be noted in this connection that the working class budgets collected by Davies,<sup>2</sup> show an annual income of from £15 to £20. For some reason, the arsenal figures for annual earnings are at least twice as much as our wage data would lead us to assume to be the case. Perhaps the fact that the arsenal was a government institution may help to explain the discrepancy.

Any annual figures must be based on so many estimates, however, that we shall return to the daily wage series as the basis for the study of real earnings. Charts 23, 24, and 25 exhibit the median wages of laborers and craftsmen in Oxford, Gloucestershire, and Exeter, compared with the price of the daily ration of wheat, in the case of Oxford and Exeter, and of both wheat and barley in the case of Gloucestershire.<sup>3</sup> It was established in the

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 388. The annual wages and the number employed in each group were given; from these figures the annual average wage per employee in each group was computed.

<sup>2</sup> See below, pp. 126 and 127.

<sup>3</sup> The Oxford and Exeter wheat figures were put at my disposal through the kindness of Sir William Beveridge. The Gloucestershire prices are taken from the *Gentlemen's Magazine* and Rogers, vol. III. The wheat prices have been reduced to the price per half peck; the barley prices to the price per three-quarters peck.

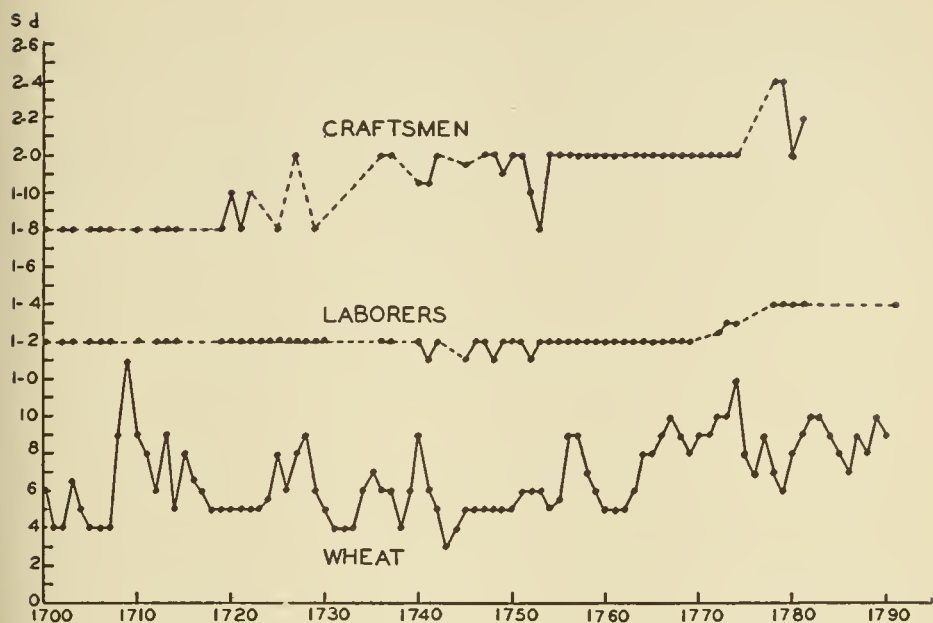


CHART 23—ANNUAL AVERAGE PRICE OF WHEAT (PER  $\frac{1}{2}$  PECK) AND WAGES AT OXFORD



CHART 24—ANNUAL AVERAGE PRICE OF WHEAT (PER  $\frac{1}{2}$  PECK), OF BARLEY (PER  $\frac{3}{4}$  PECK), AND WAGES IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

first section that approximately one-half peck of wheat was consumed daily by a family consisting of the man, his wife, and four children.<sup>1</sup> If barley is taken as the chief bread consumed, the daily allowance would be three-quarters of a peck.<sup>2</sup>

It is obvious from the charts that much less margin exists between the price of the daily bread ration and wages than was true

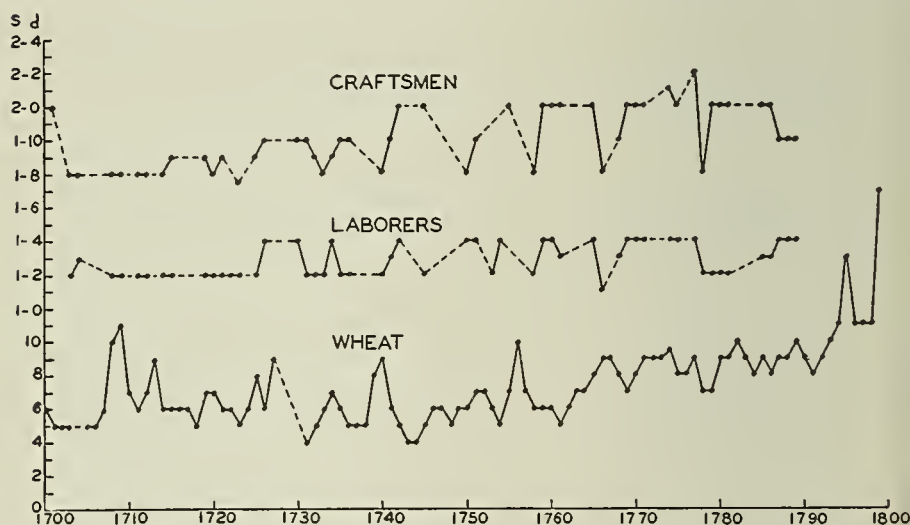


CHART 25—ANNUAL AVERAGE PRICE OF WHEAT (PER  $\frac{1}{2}$  PECK) AND WAGES AT EXETER

in London and the surrounding area. Taking wheat as the standard, the Gloucestershire laborer was by far the worst off. If it is assumed that barley bread was the chief food, then the relation between prices and wages is approximately the same as in the other two counties. This in itself is indication of a lower standard of living.

In Oxford, laborers and craftsmen had to spend from 5d. to 7d. on the average for their daily bread from 1700 to 1769.<sup>3</sup> In other words one-third to one-half of their daily wage must go for bread.

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Smith estimated that one person consumed about one quarter, three bushels of barley a year. (See *op. cit.*, p. 222.)

<sup>3</sup> Decennial averages (per half peck), based on years given:—

1700-09	6d.	1730-39	5d.	1760-69	7d.
1710-19	7d.	1740-49	5d.	1770-79	9d.
1720-29	6d.	1750-59	6d.	1780-89	9d.

In years of bad harvest, such as 1709, when one-half a peck of wheat cost 1s.1d., or 1774 when it cost 1s., practically the whole of the wage was absorbed by bread. From 1770 to 1790, the cost of the bread ration went up on the average to 9d., and although wages, for the first time, rose in the seventies, they did not rise quite far enough to compensate for the price increase. At the higher wage of 1s.4d., the laborer must spend slightly more than one-half of his daily income for bread. The craftsmen were naturally in a far better condition, since the margin between the price of bread and wages was much greater, and their wages showed more tendency to rise.

In the first decade of the century, about 30% of the craftsman's wage went for bread; in the second decade 35%. From 1730 to 1750 they were in a still better condition, as the half peck of wheat took up only 20% to 27% of their wage. In the last thirty years of the century, despite the rise in wages to 2s. per day, the cost of bread went up to 37% of the wage for the last two decades.

From these comparisons, then, there is little evidence in favor of a rise in standard of living in terms of bread for either laborers or craftsmen. 1730 to 1750 was the period of greatest prosperity, but from then on the rise in prices, which was not sufficiently compensated for by the wage increase, even in the case of the craftsman, sent the relative cost of bread to a slightly higher level than at the beginning of the century. It must be remembered, too, that these wages are for the city of Oxford, and that the wage rate in the rural districts was some twopence less. Throughout the country, therefore, an even greater proportion of the laborer's wage must be spent for bread.

The price of wheat was somewhat higher in Gloucestershire<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Decennial averages (one-half peck), based on figures given:—

	<i>Wheat</i>	<i>Barley</i>
1730-39	7d.	5d.
1740-49	6½d.	4½d.
1750-59	8½d.	6d.
1760-69	8d.	5d.
1770-79	9d.	6d.
1780-89	9d.	6d.

than in Oxfordshire, and as the wage figures represent the county at large, the range between wages and prices is considerably lessened. If the wage rate is assumed to be 1s., on the average, from 1736 to 1760, during that period the cost of wheat for the laborer varied from 6½d. to 8½d., or from 54% to 70% of his wage; the cost of barley from 4½d. to 6d., or from 37% to 50% of his daily earnings. Again wages rose very slightly, as prices increased, so that by the end of the period, the laborer was spending 64% of his wages for wheat or 42% for barley. Bad harvests were particularly serious in Gloucestershire, where greater extremes in the price of wheat were attained than in either Oxford or Exeter. The Gloucestershire craftsman fared better than the laborer, but still his daily bread cost him, if wheat, 40, 36, 47, 40, 45-50, and 40%, successively by decades; if barley, 30, 25, 33, 25, 30-33, and 27%. The laborer and craftsman in Gloucestershire barely held their own in general, throughout the century, if their standard of living is measured in terms of bread. Since the figures are medians for the county as a whole, it should be pointed out here that in towns such as Bristol or Gloucester, the wage rate was twopence higher and consequently the dismal picture is somewhat mitigated.

The cost of wheat per day for a laborer's family was, by decade, in Exeter,<sup>1</sup> 43, 46, 50, 43, 36, 44, 44, 50, and 56% of his daily wage. The Exeter laborer was therefore somewhat better off than the Gloucestershire laborer, although in rural Devonshire, with a wage twopence less, the laborer must have been on a par with his fellow in Gloucestershire. It is interesting to note, however, that the Exeter laborer was not as well off as the Oxford laborer. Again this is largely due to the fact of more extreme and more frequent high prices resulting from bad harvests which appear to have been in Devonshire, as in Gloucestershire, considerably more severe than in Oxfordshire. The Exeter craftsman enjoyed

<sup>1</sup> Decennial averages (one-half peck), based on figures given:—

1700-09	6d.	1750-59	7d.
1710-19	6½d.	1760-69	7d.
1720-29	7d.	1770-79	8d.
1730-39	6d.	1780-89	9d.
1740-49	6d.	1790-99	11d.



about as favorable position, as far as the bread item of his budget was concerned, as the Oxford craftsman. The daily provision of bread took, by decades, 30, 32, 33, 27, 26, 30, 30, 33, and 37% of his daily income.

Before going on with the analysis of real wages, it is important to determine how good a measure of the workingman's budget the price of wheat or barley may be. In the first place, was wheaten bread actually consumed by the laborers of the west? Charles Smith, the Norfolk corn factor, divided England into six districts, according to the number of individuals eating wheat bread.<sup>1</sup> Devon and Somersetshire were in the second district, with 75% of the estimated population eating wheat bread, and 25% eating barley. Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire were included in the third district, in which approximately 68% of the population ate wheat bread, 15% barley, and the same number rye bread. Undoubtedly the laboring population bulked large in the 25% and 30% eating other than wheat bread in these three counties, but the tendency was clearly towards the general consumption of wheat bread.

Latimer quoted from the Bristol corporation in 1699, affirming that laborers ate barley bread almost entirely. He goes on to comment on the "rude" food of the working population. The Devonshire laborer ate both wheat and barley bread,<sup>2</sup> and it is probable that the same was true of laborers in the other counties. Particularly in the country districts, it is likely that labor went on eating barley bread, but in the cities, the country-wide shift to wheaten bread, which took place in the eighteenth century, was undoubtedly manifested. Arthur Young found, in answer to enquiries in 1795, that there was no substitute for wheat bread in Cirencester.<sup>3</sup> Consequently we may conclude that the laborer had to spend from 30% to 70% of his budget on bread, if he had wheat bread. The consumption of barley bread cost as much to the rural laborer as the consumption of wheaten bread to the laborer in Exeter, or Bristol, or Oxford. Of the city laborers

<sup>1</sup> *Tracts on the Corn Trade*, London, 1804, pp. 204-208.

<sup>2</sup> Vancouver, C., *General View of the Agriculture of Devon*, pp. 361 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Annals of Agriculture*, 1795, vol. XXIV.

those in Oxford were undoubtedly in the most favored position, partly owing to the general higher wage rate paid in the cities, but for the most part because Oxfordshire was not as severely affected by years of bad harvest. On the whole, there is little or no evidence of an increase in standard of living during the century, with the possible exception of the twenty years 1730 to 1750, when corn prices averaged their lowest. Certainly any advantage the laborer may have gained during these twenty years in terms of the cost of bread, was completely whittled away by the end of the century.

The acute distress which must have occurred in years of poor harvests, when the price of the laborer's daily ration of wheat shot up to 1s. or 1s.1d. per half peck, is confirmed by contemporary observers. A Gloucestershire resident sent a letter to the *Gentleman's Magazine* in December 1756, setting forth the misery of the poor in the Vale of Evesham. He attributed the dearth of bread partly to the wet season, but for the most part to the large export of corn and the power of the bakers. "All the poor in the neighborhood," he said, have been brought "into a starving condition".<sup>1</sup> He complained that the bakers made a practice of getting the poor into their debt, and then manufactured bad bread, underweight, and forced the laborers to eat it. Often bakers and farmers combined to make the consumers buy bread and grain at a monopoly price. This correspondent thought the situation so bad that he advocated parliamentary action in behalf of the poor. The same man gives some light on the question of the family wage. He stated that "a man, his wife, and perhaps 4 or 5 children, are not able to earn above 6 shillings a week by any labour, and are to be fed only with this bread moisten'd with water."<sup>2</sup> Examination of wages of agricultural and building trade labor, and the opportunities for the work of women and children, do not lead us to as pessimistic a picture as this, and it is to be surmised that the case was selected in order to convince the government of the necessity for action.

<sup>1</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 26, p. 557.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

The years from 1766 to 1768 were also the scene of considerable distress, occasioned by the high price of bread. Latimer remarked that "the poor were suffering under almost unprecedented distress" in 1766.<sup>1</sup> Arthur Young discussed the bread riots which occurred in the south and west of England, and stated that they were more violent in the west of England than anywhere else.<sup>2</sup> Curiously enough he found that the rioters were nearly all manufacturers (industrial workers), although their wages were nearly double those paid laborers such as we are dealing with. Young laid it to the drunkenness of the manufacturers, but it may have been connected with the desire of the workers to make things as unpleasant as possible for their masters. Possibly the struggle between the weavers and masters over the wage assessments of 1727 and 1756 still rankled. Also industrial workers are likely to have been more radical and violent, at least than agricultural laborers.

The conclusion to be drawn from a comparison of wages and prices is not encouraging, as far as the laborers' real wages are concerned. Young thought that wages in the west were far too low,<sup>3</sup> and he was by no means an advocate of an increased standard of living for the working classes. In his earlier works, at any rate, he feared greatly that the laborer would let luxuries such as tea and sugar make him forget his work and his place in society.

Other data concerning the living conditions of the laboring classes in the west may, however, mitigate the evidence of wages and prices alone. Although bread was undoubtedly the staff of life of the workers, other food was, of course, included in their budgets. William Marshall described bacon as the "standing food," with vegetables, of farmers' servants in the Cotswolds.<sup>4</sup> Vegetables were a concession which Marshall approved, deprecating the fact that "these most useful members of society" were prohibited vegetables in other districts. The account of a workhouse established for girls in Bristol was the subject of a eulogis-

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 377.

<sup>2</sup> *Six Weeks Tour Through The Southern Counties*, 1772, p. 340.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 342, 343.

<sup>4</sup> *Rural Economy of Gloucestershire*, vol. II, p. 29.

tic pamphlet by John Cary. He described their food with some pride:

The founders "appointed their Diets to be made up of such Provisions as were very wholesome, afforded good nourishment, and were not costly in price, (viz.) Beef, Pease, Potatoes, Brooth, Pease porridge, Milk-porridge Bread and Cheese, good Beer (such as we drank at our own Tables) Cabbage, Carrots, Turnips, etc. in which we took the Advise of our Physician, and had bought the best of every sort. They had three meals every day, and as I remember, it stood us (with Soap to work) in about sixteen pence *per* week for each of the hundred girls."<sup>1</sup>

Such food was probably far out of reach of the ordinary laborer and his family. In commenting upon the state of the workhouse during the eighteenth century, Miss Butcher remarked:

In the matter of food, the inmates of St. Peter's Hospital had small ground for complaint. From Cary to Johnson, all Guardians who refer to the subject agree that the Workhouse diet is far better than an average labourer's family could afford; and they see no reason for lowering its standard. . . . Isaac Cooke, after reducing the cost of provisions for the workhouse from £3,464-17-10½ for a nominal total of 420 inmates in 1783 to £1,587-10-3 for 325 inmates in 1785, maintained that the standard of living was still higher than a labourer with average family could attain if he spent all his wages in food. The cost, which in Cary's time was about 1s. 4d. per week per person, had risen to almost 3s. in 1820.<sup>2</sup>

In Devonshire, although wheat and barley bread were the main articles of diet of the laboring classes, potatoes, wheat-broth seasoned with a small piece of meat and pot-herbs, pies made of bacon and potatoes, pea broth seasoned with pickled pork, bacon or fat of mutton prepared with leeks and onions, offered some variety.<sup>3</sup> Fish was plentiful in those districts along the coast. On the whole, however, Marshall considered that the food of the western laborer was below par. He stated that their chief articles of diet were barley bread, skim-milk, cheese and potatoes, with cider or beer, and a "base kind of spirit drawn from the lees of cider, and smuggled French brandy."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cary, John, *An Account of the Proceedings of the Corporation of Bristol* . . . London, 1700, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Bristol Corporation of the Poor, 1696-1834*, edited by E. E. Butcher, Bristol Record Society's Publication, Bristol, 1932.

<sup>3</sup> Vancouver, C., *General View of Agriculture of Devon*, pp. 404, 410, 416.

<sup>4</sup> *Rural Economy of the West of England*, vol. I, p. 28.



There is this to be said as well; in a rural section like the west, especially in Gloucestershire which was still largely unenclosed, and Devon and Somersetshire where wastes abounded, many laborers must have had their own gardens and have been able to raise vegetables for their own use. Certainly there were a good many orders in the Gloucestershire Books, allowing people to build cottages on the waste.<sup>1</sup> The people to whom these licenses were given were generally described as poor people, and sometimes the Overseers of the Poor were allowed to build the cottages, apparently as a form of parish relief. Towards the end of the century, however, contemporary comment indicates that the laborer was gradually deprived of this type of perquisite.

It has been mentioned before that the laborer in the west almost always received beer or cider in addition to his wages. The Town Receiver's Books and Vouchers of Exeter frequently itemize the amounts paid for "Lowences" to the workmen.<sup>2</sup> Ordinarily, both laborers and craftsmen received drink worth 2d. per day throughout the century, although plumbers sometimes had an allowance of 3d. There are sometimes items for "Pots of Ale", and fourteen men who spent six nights at the pumps during the repair of Cowley Bridge in 1789, got three pints each (a night) and bread and cheese at 3d. each.<sup>3</sup> The Bristol Petty Cash Book also lists payments for ale for masons and laborers during the seventies.<sup>4</sup> It is clear that the custom of paying allowances in drink did not die out in the west towards the end of the century, as it did in London. As we have seen, allowances were even more prevalent among agricultural laborers, and since many of the common laborers on the roads probably did harvest work during the summer, they partook in the large amounts of drink handed out to agricultural laborers. This particular perquisite was not without its disadvantages, judging by the comments of contemporaries as to drunkenness in the west, despite the fact that beer and ale in some sense were to be considered as food.

<sup>1</sup> See *Order Books* for 1706, 1710, 1736, 1737, 1751 and others.

<sup>2</sup> *Town Receiver's Books*, 1718, 1735, 1736; *Receiver's Vouchers*, 1770 and 1778-1779. Bills are included which itemize the amount spent for drink.

<sup>3</sup> *Exeter Receiver's Vouchers*, 1788-9.

<sup>4</sup> *Bristol Archives* (Council House, Bristol).



Davies also lists the budgets of two laboring families in Holwell, Somersetshire:—<sup>1</sup>

<i>Weekly Expenses</i>	I(7)	II(8)
Bread or Flour	7-0	4-8
Potatoes & Vegetables	0-6	0-5
Cheese & Salt	1-1 $\frac{3}{4}$	0-4
Bacon or other Meat	1-6	0-7
Tea, Sugar, and Butter	0-10	0-2 (no sugar or butter)
Soap, starch, & Candles	0-8	0-5
Thread and Woollen yarn	0-3 $\frac{1}{2}$	0-1
Total	11-11 $\frac{1}{4}$	6-8
<i>Amount per annum</i>	31-0-9	17-6-8
<i>Weekly Earnings</i>		
The man (medium)	6-6	5-6
Women & Children	7-0	2-6
Total	13-6	8-0
<i>Amount per annum</i>	35-2-0	20-16-0
<i>Expenses per annum</i>		
Clothes	5-9-9	4-16-8
<i>Total Expenses per Annum</i>	36-10-6	22-3-4
<i>Total Earnings per Annum</i>	35-2-0	20-16-0
Deficit	1-8-6	1-7-4

Neither of these families paid anything for rent or fuel, the parish paying the former. Fuel they procured by gathering cow dung and breaking the neighbors' hedges. They had no beer, and cider rarely. The laborer in Family I had the use of his master's wagon and various small advantages. His wages were only 5s. a week in winter and 6s. in summer, but his family earned more than that, 7s. Therefore, the annual earnings were £35 or nearly twice as much as we estimated were the probable annual wages of the general laborer in the building trades. Both of the men were, according to Davies, "many days in the year without employment". In both cases a deficit of over a pound existed, and Davies remarked that if other annual expenses had been counted, that the deficit would be £4 or £5 greater.

Yet there is little evidence of extravagant expenditure to account for the deficits. Other meat besides bacon is listed in the budget, perhaps indicating a somewhat higher standard. Family

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* pp. 178 ff.

I spent more for tea, sugar, and butter than was the case in any of the Gloucestershire budgets and considerably more for bread, but Family II spent nothing on butter or sugar. It seems obvious that, even with the whole family working, a laborer's family was not able to make ends meet.

Another poor family of 5 persons, cited by Davies,<sup>1</sup> had the following expenses:—

<i>Annual Expenses</i>		
Provisions		£16-5-0
Clothes etc.		4-6-0
	Total	£20-11-0
<i>Weekly Earnings</i>		
Man	6-0	
Woman	1-6	
<i>Annual Earnings</i>	7-6	£19-10-0
	Deficit	1-1-0

All the Somersetshire families ate wheaten bread (which Davies valued at 1s.2d. per half peck loaf, and a stone of flour at 2s.4d. in the accounts) and a comparison of the expenditure with the Gloucestershire families points to a somewhat higher standard among the Somersetshire examples. Attention should be called to the fact that by far the largest item in the entire budget of all families given is for food, and of food, for bread, thus confirming the assumption that the price of grain is not too remote an index of the standard of living.

Most of the laborers spent little or nothing for fuel. Peat, dung, sticks from hedges, and turf from wastes and moors served them for fire and warmth.<sup>2</sup> Occasionally they bought Newcastle sea coals and faggots. Towards the end of the century, as enclosure progressed, it became more difficult for them to get their fuel free and another disadvantage was added to the rise in the price of grain.

Except for Oxfordshire, the cottages of the western laborer

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 179.

<sup>2</sup> See Vancouver, *General View of Agriculture of Devon*, and others.

appear to have been mean habitations. A traveller in the west of England commented as follows:—

“Villages, the walls of whose houses were constructed of mud, and whose roofs were thatched with straw, grew more and more frequent. I had observed this kind of cottages, occasionally, ever since we entered Devonshire, and they now (at border of Cornwall) became quite general. Their appearance is very rude and comfortless, but, they are said to be, nevertheless, dry, warm, and healthy mansions. You will perceive that I am speaking of the houses of the peasantry only; they are very low, having only a ground floor and a garret; and the thatched roof projects a good deal over the wall, to defend it from the rain. They may perhaps be comfortable, but one would have sooner supposed that they were constructed to shelter cattle than men.”<sup>1</sup>

The Rev. Richard Warner has little better to say of the cottages he observed in his walk through the west. Near Bath he described a “cluster of tenements” as “noticeable for their smallness and inconvenience”.<sup>2</sup> Some cottages in Devonshire and Somersetshire were built of stone, but most of them are described as being built of mud with thatched roofs.<sup>3</sup> Vancouver remarked upon a general lack of cottages for the poor, and the overcrowding of two or more families into one hovel. The average rent of a cottage in Devon was 40s. a year; in Somerset 30s. to 50s.<sup>4</sup>

Apparently the Oxfordshire laborers were more comfortably housed. The author of the agricultural survey stated that “there are gardens, and good ones, to nine-tenths of the cottages . . . in Oxfordshire.”<sup>5</sup> He went on to refer to the large landowners who built model cottages for the laborers, and in one case allowed them to purchase barley at 2s. a bushel under the market price. The same landlord also established a shop at which the poor of the neighborhood could buy for cash anything they wanted, at a reduced price. Some of the cottages rented for as high a stipend as £3 to £5, others were much less, and still others were free.

The clothes of the laborer in the west probably did not differ

<sup>1</sup> Silliman, *Journal of Travels in England*, 1810, vol. II, pp. 169-70. His travels were taken in 1805 and 1806.

<sup>2</sup> *A Walk through . . . Western Counties of England*, 1800, pp. 4-5.

<sup>3</sup> See Vancouver, Billingsley etc.

<sup>4</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *View of Agriculture of Oxfordshire*, pp. 23 ff.

from the leather jerkin, knee breeches, plain wig, and large-brimmed hat of the laborer in the south. The women's gowns were for the most part of woollen stuff. A plumber's wife had several bands, a large cap, an apron, a "ribbin nott", and a blue and white handkerchief stolen from her in 1725.<sup>1</sup> In 1787 the wife of a laborer had stolen from her stays worth 8s., four linen caps worth 1s., a linen handkerchief 1s. and other goods.<sup>2</sup> Moritz described the women of Oxford as wearing "a kind of short cloak made of red cloth; but women in general, from the highest to the lowest, wear hats, which differ from each other less in fashion, than they do in fineness."<sup>3</sup>

More precise data on clothes are given by the account of the annual expenditure on clothes of the two Somersetshire families previously described.<sup>4</sup> The expense of the clothes of Family I was as follows:—

Man: coat and breeches	£0-11-0
2 pair shoes, and repairing them	0-16-0
shirts, 8s., stockings 3s.	0-11-0
Woman: gown and petticoats	0-8-6
shifts 7s., shoes 3s. 9d.	0-10-9
stockings 1s. 6d., apron, caps and handkerchiefs 6s.	0-7-6
Children's clothes	2-5-0
Total	£5-9-9

#### Family II:—

Man: coat and breeches	£0-8-0
2 pair shoes and repairing them	0-16-0
shirts 12s., stockings 3s. 6d.	0-15-6
spade, shovel, etc. for tennching	0-4-0
Woman: gown and petticoats	0-6-0
shifts 9s., shoes 3s. 8d., stockings 1s. 6d.	0-14-0
apron, cap, and handkerchiefs	0-5-0
lying-in	0-8-0
Children's clothes	1-0-0
Total	£4-16-8

These items include little more than the bare necessities of warmth. There is no evidence of the influence of fashion in the

<sup>1</sup> *Gloucestershire Sessions Rolls*, 1725.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1787.

<sup>3</sup> *Travels . . . through . . . England in 1782*, vol. II, *Pinkerton's Travels*, p. 546.

<sup>4</sup> See *supra*, p. 126.

west, such as we found in the metropolitan area of London. In fact, the clothing of the western laborer has been characterized as being of the poorest sort.<sup>1</sup>

The working classes found their amusement in "riotous assemblages" of many varieties. The Gloucestershire court was constantly ordering against cudgel playing for prizes (usually hats), interludes, revels, wakes, and wrestling. One order, that of 1731, was printed and asserted that these hearty amusements were

"promoted and encouraged by Alehouse keepers, and occasion not only Idleness and Drunkenness in the Common sort of People, who thereby impoverish themselves and families, but sometimes under Pretence of these Meetings, Persons disaffected to His Present Majesty, carry on their wicked Designs against His Majesty's happy Government . . ."<sup>2</sup>

It was the political rather than the moral predilections of the lower classes which worried the government.

It is true that many of the most pessimistic observations refer to the end of the eighteenth or the beginning of the nineteenth century when the inflation of the Napoleonic wars exaggerated the misery of the working classes. Up to 1790 conditions were probably not as desperate for the laborer as they became then. Even so, there is no escape from the conclusion that the standard of living of the laboring classes in the west was extremely low. And what is even more important for this study, there was no improvement, in fact, more likely some retrogression, throughout the century. The wage and price figures, which we have analyzed with some care, lead inevitably to the judgment that a bare minimum of subsistence was all that the ordinary laborer could obtain, and with the increasing trend of prices of food, from the middle of the century onward, even this minimum was reduced. Ricardo might have used these data as a confirmation of his theory that real wages were gradually nibbled away to a bare minimum over time. The west, indeed, offers an example of a section of the country in which the lower classes were increasingly reduced to a distressingly low level of economic existence during the century. As we shall see, however, there is

<sup>1</sup> *Victoria County History of Somerset*, vol. II, pp. 321 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Gloucestershire Order Books*, 1731.



reason to think that the west was by no means typical either of the trend or the level of real wages in eighteenth century England.

Contemporary observers were fully aware of the state of the working population in the west. Even those, like Arthur Young, who were quick to condemn the laboring class for indulgence in luxurious expenditure, could find no ground for complaint in this region. Both he and Marshall thought that wages were too low. The Rev. Richard Warner reported the conversation of a Cheddar laborer, in which he stated that enclosures, in depriving the laborers of the perquisites which enabled them to keep a cow or a pig and procure fuel and vegetables, left him dependent on his 14d. per day which was wholly insufficient to keep himself and his family. As a result the parish was called in for aid, which the laborer came to regard as a right. Knowing that his family was cared for in some fashion, he frequently became careless, idle or spendthrift.<sup>1</sup> Naturally the poor rates increased alarmingly, to the distress of farmers and other members of the community who were responsible for them. Wilberforce remarked to Hannah More after a visit to Cheddar in 1789, that, for the poor, "nor did there appear any dawn of comfort, either temporal or spiritual . . ."<sup>2</sup>

William Marshall had a good deal to say about the character of the laborers in Devon. He found those of North Devon "civilized and intelligent",<sup>3</sup> but in West Devonshire they were frequently "drunken, idle fellows, and not a few of them may be said to be honestly dishonest; declaring, without reserve, that a poor man cannot bring up a family on six shillings a week and honesty."<sup>4</sup> Despite the fact that farmers often let their permanent laborers have corn at a fixed price, and endeavored to give them the more profitable piece-work, Marshall declared:

"Nevertheless, the wages of the District, seeing the great rise in the price of living, appears to me to be too low; and what the farmers save in the expense of labor, they probably lose by pillage, and in the poor's rate. All ranks of

<sup>1</sup> *A Walk through . . . Western Counties of England*, 1800, pp. 50 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Wilberforce, R. and S., *Life of William Wilberforce*, 1838, vol. I, p. 240.

<sup>3</sup> *Rural Economy in West of England*, 1796, vol. II, pp. 93 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. I, pp. 107 ff.

people, FARM LABOURERS ONLY EXCEPTED, have had an increase of income, with the increase of the prices of the necessities of life; . . . This may, in great measure, account for the increase of the poor's rates, in country parishes, without bringing in the degeneracy and profligacy of the present race of working people, compared with the past; though some part of it, I believe, may be fairly laid to the charge of that degeneracy, which, if the talk were not invidious, would not be difficult to account for."<sup>1</sup>

The Victoria County History paints a gloomy picture of the condition of the working classes in Somerset.<sup>2</sup> Phrases such as "the labourer's earnings utterly inadequate", people in "the depths of poverty" run through their account. The chief cause of the distress is laid at the door of the enclosure movement, for reasons similar to those recounted by Warner. The immobility of labor, due to the difficulty of communication with other parts of the country, is also cited as underlying the wretched position of the lower classes. On the other hand, the farmers were enjoying a period of unusual prosperity. Enclosures stimulated new and improved methods of cultivation, the growth of population in London and other districts increased the demand for their cattle and dairy products. They began to employ dairymen, their wives and daughters no longer spun wool from the sheep on the farm, and in general there was every evidence of a rise in their standard of life. But the lot of the laborer was growing steadily worse. Such is the conclusion of one modern economic historian.

The situation was not quite as deplorable in Oxfordshire, but only because the large landlords of the county were more anxious to alleviate the undoubted distress of the poor. A contemporary wrote at the end of the century "Day labourers in this, and many counties, are worse off than any part of the community besides; their wages being much less in proportion; so that barely gaining a subsistence, and utterly unable to lay by, whilst in health and strength, they *can* have in sickness, or old age, no other resource than the poor's-rates; which, frequently, by subjecting them to tyranny, and oppressive insult, stifles the conscious pride of honesty, and corrupts every good principle."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 108.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. II, pp. 321 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *View of Agriculture of Oxfordshire*, 1809, pp. 333-34.

In addition to the low level of wages, the increase of prices, and the loss of perquisites through enclosures in many places, towards the end of the century the laboring classes found their wives and children gradually deprived of the opportunity for supplementary earnings.<sup>1</sup> There is no doubt that the textile industry in the west was declining, until by the end of the century the main activity of the woollen industry had shifted to the north. It is of some interest to speculate as to why the west suffered such an industrial decay. At the beginning of the eighteenth century and earlier the western clothing trade was highly organized and profitable. Natural resources — coal, iron, water power — were at hand, and the clothing trade of this region had a reputation for fine clothes, with which the upstart Yorkshire branch could not then compete. Why, then, were the western clothiers unable to adapt themselves and the industry to the factory system? If fashion demanded cheap worsteds, surely the western manufacturers could make them as easily as those in Yorkshire. Machines could be installed in western mills as well as northern. One of the first machines was, in fact, invented by a Stroud manufacturer. Many reasons have been given for the cessation of the industry's development in an efficient stage, but one has never been included. It is possible to see in the low standard of life which existed among the working classes, a factor contributing to the decline of the western clothing manufacture.

The discipline, the mechanical routine, and the physical risk to which the factory worker had to submit made an unpleasant contrast to conditions of work under the putting-out system. A laborer accustomed to working more or less independently, at no fixed hours, with recourse to agricultural or other pursuits when he chose, as was largely the case under the putting-out system, could hardly be expected to welcome the introduction of the factory system. Wherever machines and factory discipline were introduced, they met with concerted opposition from the working class. But in the north, this opposition was overcome; in the west it was not. The stimulus of a rising standard of living was

<sup>1</sup> See Vancouver, *General View of Agriculture of Devon*, p. 464.

lacking. For the most part the laborers of the west were apathetic, and any restlessness they exhibited was rather a "spirit of riot",<sup>1</sup> than a desire for improvement.

Professor Edwin Gay has observed that the so-called "industrial revolution" has always been ushered in among communities in a dynamic economic state.<sup>2</sup> In London and the north we find dynamic conditions among the laboring classes, as well as in economic society as a whole. Extreme riches and poverty side by side, restlessness and ambition on the part of the lower classes; talk of luxury and imitation of the rich by the poor. Consciously or unconsciously these elements of society were striving for better conditions, and for their sake, were willing to endure the discipline and routine of the factories, which in return offered higher and steadier wages.

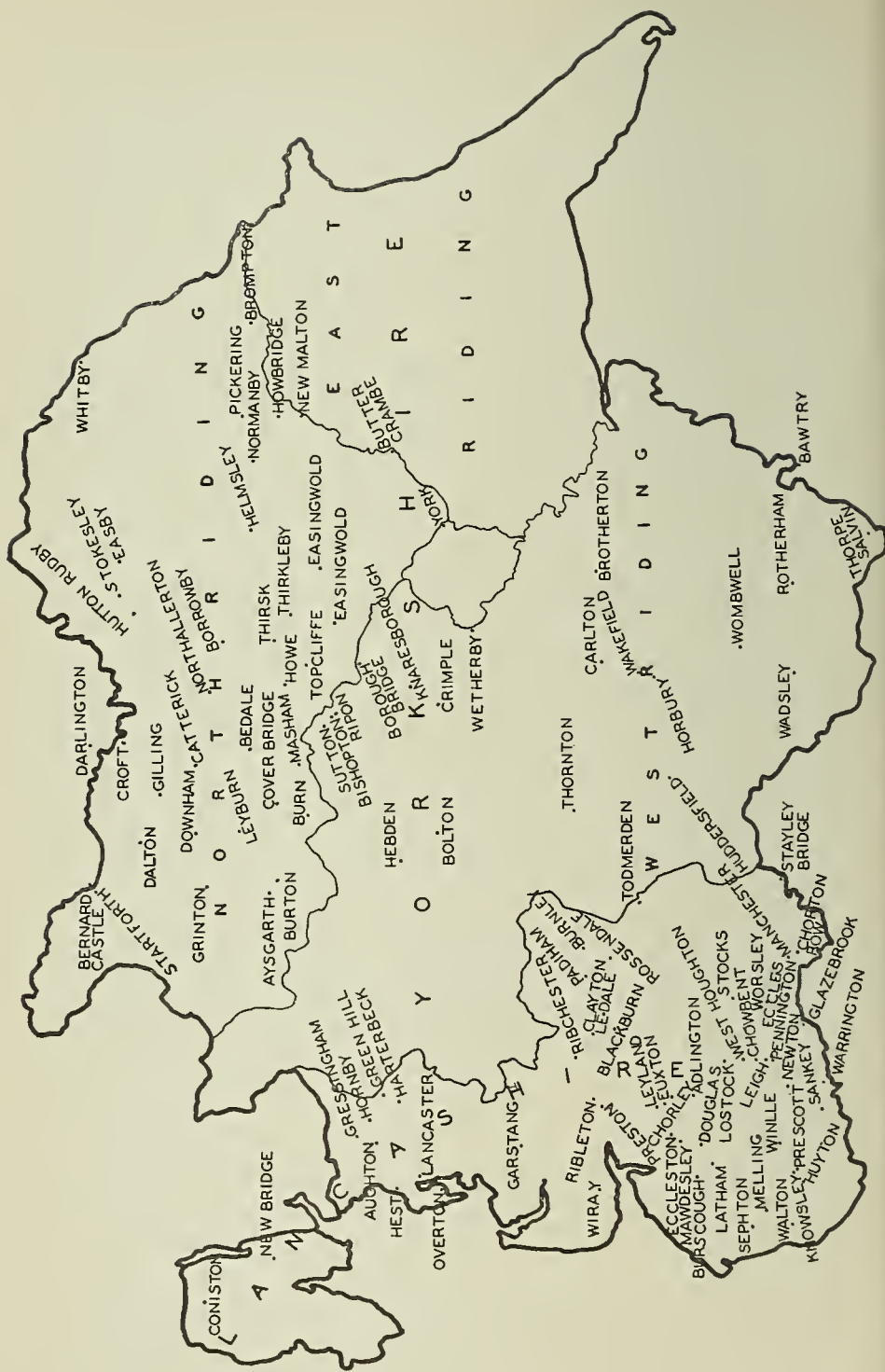
The wretched condition of the lower classes of the west provided no fertile ground for the introduction or expansion of new industrial methods. Nor were any of the elements of a dynamic society present in the west. The upper classes were almost as indifferent as the lower. Industrially the west was of the past, weighed down by tradition, and the lack of desire for change. Too miserable to be spurred by the hope of better living conditions, the apathy of the common laborers was a not inconsiderable element in the industrial decline of the west.

<sup>1</sup> See Marshall.

<sup>2</sup> See *Demand as a Factor in the Industrial Revolution* by E. W. Gilboy in the memorial volume to Prof. Gay, *Facts and Factors in Economic History*, 1932, where Prof. Gay's theory is explained and the whole subject discussed at some length.

PART III  
THE NORTH OF ENGLAND





## PART III

### THE NORTH OF ENGLAND

IN examining conditions of labor in the north we are confronted with a rural background into which modern industrialization was fast creeping. The North Riding is, in fact, the only one of the three northern districts included in this study which was exclusively agricultural. Many parts of Lancashire and the West Riding were, it is true, devoted to agriculture, particularly in their northern areas, but their industrial development was by far their most important economic characteristic. The North Riding, however, was not agricultural in the sense of being devoted to the cultivation of arable lands. The breeding of sheep for their wool, and of saddle horses for sale, were the chief rural interests of the county. Oats, barley, pulse, and wheat were raised, but the countryside was for the most part in grass. Marshall summed up the situation for the Pickering district thus: "Upon the whole, although the admixture of Arable be considerable, the Vale in a general point of view, comes under the denomination of A Grassland Country."<sup>1</sup> The chief products of husbandry were those which mark a country given over to grazing. Besides the sheep and horses mentioned previously, butter for the London market, cows, oxen, bullocks, bacon, and the like were produced.<sup>2</sup>

There were enormous estates in this Riding, many of which were noted for their agricultural improvements,<sup>3</sup> but the majority

<sup>1</sup> *The Rural Economy of Yorkshire*, London, 1788, vol. I, p. 256. As a native of Yorkshire, Marshall had an especially intimate knowledge of the district, and in my opinion his account of the general agricultural situation is superior to that of Arthur Young. This is, I find, upheld by Sir Alfred Pease, a Yorkshire landowner, who has done considerable work in the history of agricultural methods. For this reason, and also because Marshall is less well known than Young (Mantoux, for instance, relies much more on Young than on Marshall in his chapter on *The Redistribution of the Land*, and it has become a habit for eighteenth century historians to quote Young in detail), the above account is based largely on Marshall.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 293.

<sup>3</sup> See Young and Sir Alfred Pease (article on *Observation on the Evolution of Agricultural Land in England* in the *Journal of the Yorkshire Agricultural Society* for 1926). According to Marshall, *op. cit.*, p. 254, large farms were chiefly concentrated on the wolds.

of the farms were small. In the latter part of the eighteenth century those who deplored the disappearance of the yeomanry<sup>1</sup> could observe that class in all its glory in the district around Pickering. Marshall stated that

“no country, of equal extent, can boast of so numerous a body of yeomanry, as the Vale under survey; nor any country, I will venture to affirm, where industry and frugality are more conspicuous; or where a personal independency is more strongly rooted, among men in middle life.”<sup>2</sup>

The town of Pickering was so cut up into small estates held by tenacious freeholders, that “no great man, nor scarcely a Country Gentleman, has yet been able to get a footing in the parish; . . .”<sup>3</sup> Marshall estimated that more than half of the lands (acreage) of the vale were in farms of under £20 a year, and more than three-quarters in less than £50.<sup>4</sup> In surveying the whole Riding as late as 1794, Tuke stated that about one-third of the estates were possessed by the yeomanry, in farms of less than £50 annually.<sup>5</sup>

The benefits of small-scale farming, however, were dubious. According to Marshall, “Poverty and ignorance are the ordinary inhabitants of small farms; even the smaller estates of the yeomanry are notorious for bad management.”<sup>6</sup> He was therefore in favor of enclosure, particularly that of arable land, which undoubtedly hastened agricultural improvements and made for greater production and a larger rural population.<sup>7</sup> He realised,

<sup>1</sup> See Mantoux, pp. 140-150, for a very unbiased discussion of that yet unsettled question of the disappearance of the yeoman (i.e., small farmer in general, not necessarily a freehold tenant). His account is based on the best authorities and is very judicious.

<sup>2</sup> Marshall, vol. I, p. 258.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 20.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 254.

<sup>5</sup> *General View of Agriculture of North Riding*, 1794, pp. 19, 20.

<sup>6</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 255.

<sup>7</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. I. See his chapter on Enclosures (pp. 48-105). He described three methods of enclosure which were going on in the north during the century: (1) Enclosure of common fields and meadows by private agreement; (2) enclosure by a commission chosen by the interests concerned, without recourse to Parliament; and (3) enclosure by Act of Parliament. Marshall approved the second method, which had in practice excellent results. Slater (in ch. X, *English Peasantry* . . . 1907) describes the northern type of enclosure, without benefit of Parliament, as increasing the land under tillage and therefore the rural population. He regards it as compensating to a large extent the midland enclosures which turned arable into sheep pasture and did cause depopulation.

as well as Young, the stimulus given by enclosure to scientific farming, and with him was one of the first to put himself on record as opposed to the prevailing method of carrying out enclosures. He had seen many instances, especially where Parliamentary enclosures of common fields were made, where the common rights of small farmers and cottagers were either unfairly apportioned, or neglected. As late as 1794, 442,000 acres of moorland were still unenclosed, and to this day many of them are lying waste.<sup>1</sup> They were utilized by the small farmers and cottagers, who had grazing, fuel and other rights upon them, and Tuke complained that the grazing privileges were abused and practically monopolized by the small farmers.<sup>2</sup> As far as the laborer was concerned, he in many cases could, and did, exercise his common rights during our period. He was able to keep a cow or pig and supply his family with milk and meat. Because of the large amount of moorland in the north, there had always been many squatters who had really no legal rights on the common, but acquired them merely by use and local indulgence. There is no indication that this situation was greatly changed in the eighteenth century.<sup>3</sup>

The striking industrial development of Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire must not lead one to forget that much of their area was still entirely rural in the eighteenth century. In the West Riding the long stretch of country, the moors and dales to the north and northwest of Leeds, were quite devoid of any industry except the home industry. The same was true of the part of Lancashire extending north from Preston to the lakes. The land had this in common with that of the North Riding — it was given over for the most part to grazing, and little to arable.

<sup>1</sup> Tuke, *op. cit.*, p. 106. He estimated that nearly one-half of this area was capable of cultivation.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 106, 107.

<sup>3</sup> This may be deduced from the figure as to the number of acres of moorland lying waste in 1794, and the fact that enclosure in Yorkshire was for the most part non-Parliamentary and carried on by local commissioners. Their chief advantage was supposed to be the fact of their knowledge of local rights and claims, and their interest in partitioning them fairly (see Marshall). Parliamentary commissioners were too often indifferent to such small local claims. It may be assumed, therefore, that the Yorkshire laborers who were affected by enclosure had more attention given their rights; and that many continued to use the unenclosed moors as they and their fathers before them.



The lack of arable in the West Riding had been noted by Defoe and Cobbett.<sup>1</sup> There was only one small strip of land, east of Ripley, Leeds, and Wakefield, to the banks of Ousey, where corn was raised.<sup>2</sup> And of Lancashire, John Holt remarked "that the corn raised . . . would not support the inhabitants more than 3 months in the year . . ."<sup>3</sup> He also emphasized the fact that what had been arable had in many cases been converted into grass land and bleaching grounds for the cotton manufacturers. The main objects of the agriculture of these two counties were therefore products of the dairy. The West Riding was noted for its cattle as well, and Lancashire for its potatoes. It was, indeed, the first county in England to grow potatoes.<sup>4</sup>

Lancashire was one of the earliest enclosed counties, and like Kent, had never had an open field system. The arable land had been in small holdings for some centuries, and the later enclosure movement could only affect the waste.<sup>5</sup> Slater thinks that although some common waste existed in the eighteenth century, it was not subject to common rights in the usual way, due to the non-existence of the open field system, and that enclosure of waste could therefore take place without affecting the rights of others.<sup>6</sup> After the sixteenth century, enclosure had proceeded steadily on all varieties of land, in the North and West Ridings.<sup>7</sup> By the time Rennie began his agricultural survey in 1794, the process was practically completed. He comments thus: "Almost the whole of the West Riding is inclosed, except the common fields and moors; and too much praise cannot be bestowed upon

<sup>1</sup> *Victoria County History of York*, vol. III, pp. 483, 484, quoted by the author of the article therein on the social and economic history of the county.

<sup>2</sup> Aikin, J., *A Description of the Country . . . round Manchester*, 1795, p. 93.

<sup>3</sup> *General View of Agriculture of Lancaster*, 1794, p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> The articles on agriculture in the *Victoria County Histories*, vol. II of Lancashire, and vol. II of Yorkshire, are based on Young, Holt, Rennie, Tuke, etc., and give a good general summary of the history of agriculture.

<sup>5</sup> Wadsworth thinks that enclosure in Lancashire was not "catastrophic," and that it helped to spread industry in the rural districts more than it drove workers into the towns. Wadsworth, A. P., and Mann, J. de L., *The Cotton Trade and Industrial Lancashire, 1600-1780*, Manchester University Press, 1931, p. 321.

<sup>6</sup> Slater, Gilbert, *The English Peasantry and the Inclosure of the Common Fields*, 1907, p. 255.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, see pp. 226, 227 for description of Yorkshire Enclosures.



the perfect state in which the fences are kept. The inclosures are, however, generally too small, at least for cornfields, and are the means of wasting a great part of the land.”<sup>1</sup> Holt, in a similar survey of Lancashire, found the land nearly all enclosed into very small bits.<sup>2</sup> Much of this enclosure, as in the North Riding, was done privately and was usually more satisfactory to those concerned.

In these two counties, the general size of farms was very small. In Lancashire, 50, 40, 30, or 20 acres a piece, “or even so much as will keep a horse or cow only . . .” was quite the usual state of affairs in 1794.<sup>3</sup> Rennie remarked upon the “general small size of farms, which necessarily occasions the ground to be cultivated by persons, whose minds and stocks are incapable of carrying on spirited undertakings.”<sup>4</sup>

We have seen that Marshall found the same thing true of the North Riding. To what, then, does northern agriculture owe its steady improvement? All authorities agree that small farms were no incentive to experimentation in new methods. The comparatively few large estates were the initiators of improvement. Young and Marshall mention several of these large progressive landowners.<sup>5</sup> It had become the fashion, among large landholders, to compete in experiments which they could then report in the *Annals of Agriculture*. Also “the new rich (from India and America) were tumbling over each other to acquire land and estates — and fortunes were lavished on the land.”<sup>6</sup> The Rev. William MacRitchie related the sad case of the “folly” of Mr. Grieve of Felton who improved enclosed land, spent a great deal of money on it and then “Poor man, he died unexpectedly in

<sup>1</sup> Rennie, George (and two others), *General View of Agriculture . . . of West Riding*, 1794, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 48-52. He gives an estimate of the results of enclosures in these pages and thinks they have increased population. He is heartily in favor of them.

<sup>3</sup> Holt, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 47-48.

<sup>5</sup> Young, *Northern Tour*, The Earl of Stafford (Wentworth Castle), Mr. Tucker of Rotherham, Mr. Turner of Kirkleatham, among many. Marshall in a review of the 1800 edition of Tuke's report quoted a long list of names (pp. 456, 457) of improving landlords.

<sup>6</sup> From a letter by Sir Alfred Pease, in which he states in a most interesting manner his view of the eighteenth century agricultural situation.

London some time ago; and all his improvements are the property of a West Indian nabob, whose name I have forgot, and whose character I was not at the pains to enquire into. But that is of no consequence; he may be a very eminent and a very worthy man for all that."<sup>1</sup> Many were not as generous as the clergymen in referring to the new rich. Many nabobs did not wait to snap up the improvements of others, but in their desire to acquire social position through the possession of land, bought any large estate and made their own improvements.<sup>2</sup>

The small size of farms was the accompaniment of a widespread domestic industry, better described under the heading of the "putting out system".<sup>3</sup> It existed throughout the eighteenth century, side by side with the growing increase of factories despite the fact that the spinning factories tended to take away the work from the women and children. Especially in the northern districts of Lancashire and the West Riding, the combination of agriculture and industry, on the part of the weavers and the like, continued for a long time. The agricultural weavers, alluded to by Defoe,<sup>4</sup> who supplemented their small earnings by cultivating a few acres of ground were an important part of the industrial and economic life of the West Riding, even into the nineteenth century. An interesting example of this mixture of trades is to be seen in a servant's agreement made between Francis Walker and John Chrarother of Chiswell, in which "he was to have four pounds fifteen shillings Wages and was to scribble nine pounds of Wooll each day and then to be at liberty to go where he pleased during that day . . ." <sup>5</sup> The last clause illustrates the reason why the independent northerner was loth to work in a factory. Under the putting out system, he could arrange his time as he liked. As Miss Sellers remarked, "The sturdy independence, that in theory

<sup>1</sup> *Diary of a Tour through Gt. Britain in 1795*, London, 1897, p. 141.

<sup>2</sup> See Botsford, Lecky, and Mantoux, *op. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> Defoe, *Tour*, vol. III, p. 97, comments on the small enclosures, from two to six acres apiece, near Halifax and says it was "occasioned by and done for the Convenience of the Business which the People were generally employ'd in," namely the clothing trade.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. III, pp. 97-102, for description of domestic industry between Halifax and Blackstone Edge.

<sup>5</sup> *West Riding Sessions Books*, Leeds, October, 1741.

is so much admired, did not lend itself to obey the bell of the factory. The life of constant change from weaving to agriculture, from agriculture to bartering yarn or cloth, with exciting interludes of rabbit-coursing and ratting, fostered their hatred of monotony . . .”<sup>1</sup> She came to the conclusion, in fact, that modern industrial progress could not take place until this independent type had been eliminated.<sup>2</sup>

The term “independent weaver” must not be misinterpreted. Wadsworth’s extensive researches make it clear that the Lancashire weaver was no longer industrially independent in the eighteenth century. By that time the cotton industry had attained a considerably developed capitalistic organization and the weaver was really under the employ of the country or city merchant, who frequently furnished his yarn. Except where central shops or factories had been set up, however, the weaver was independent in the sense that he could work at his own time and the conditions of his actual working hours were not regulated by an employer.<sup>3</sup>

The transition did take place despite the first protests of the agricultural weavers and spinners. A combination of circumstances, not the least of which was the higher and steadier wages paid in the factories, drove the agricultural spinner, and later the weaver, to forsake his cottage for the factory. The transition took place somewhat earlier in Lancashire than in Yorkshire and among the spinners before the weavers. As late as 1808 Marshall could extol the advantages of the cottage spinner in Yorkshire, but it was the final obsequies of a dying class. He knew this only too well. “It is painful to relate,” he says, “that many of the advantages . . . are now decreasing. Invention has done too much. Machinery is drawing spinners of wool, as of cotton, into the pestilential lazarets of manufacturers.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Victoria County History of Yorkshire*, vol. III, p. 482.

<sup>2</sup> See Mantoux, *op. cit.*, for a description of the labor troubles of the first factories due to this very independence.

<sup>3</sup> Wadsworth, A.P., and J. de L. Mann, *op. cit.*, see especially Book III, and pp. 273-4. Wadsworth appears to think that weaving and agriculture were carried on together to a large extent, even in the primarily industrial districts, and under the capitalistic form of the industry. See p. 316.

<sup>4</sup> *A Review of the Reports . . . of the Northern Department*, York, 1808, p. 347.

Despite the extent of enclosure, a good deal of common waste remained. At the end of the eighteenth century Lancashire had 26,500 acres of moss and fen land, and 82,000 in moors, marsh, and common.<sup>1</sup> Although Slater expresses doubt as to whether the common had the usual common rights attached, Mr. Campbell's article advocating their enclosure because they demoralized the poor by the rights thereon, would seem to indicate otherwise.<sup>2</sup> In the West Riding, the moor and waste lands amounted to about 405,000 acres<sup>3</sup> and were certainly used by squatters and cottagers, as well as the yeoman for the exercise of "gaiting," fuel, and other such rights.

As the place where the factory system as such became established, the north of England has become famous as the immediate scene of the industrial revolution in its short time sense, and consequently the magnet for economic research.<sup>4</sup> The growth of the cotton and woollen industries which were of main importance must not obscure the fact that the character of the country was in many respects even to the end of the century predominantly rural. We have seen how small farms persisted in Lancashire and the West Riding, especially the latter, until well into the nineteenth century. Agriculture was not the main concern of these small householders, but it was an important by-industry.

The industrial part of Lancashire, south of Preston, took on a modern atmosphere earlier than the West Riding. The cotton industry began to expand in the thirties of the eighteenth century and it was then that "the organization of the industry, the methods of manufacture, and the character of its products, were undergoing the changes which mark the early stages of the industry in its present form."<sup>5</sup> The more extensive investigations of Mr. Wadsworth and Miss Mann show in detail the remarkable

<sup>1</sup> *Victoria County History of Lancashire*, vol. II, p. 426.

<sup>2</sup> See Vol. XX (1793) of the *Annals of Agriculture*.

<sup>3</sup> Marshall, *A Review of the Reports to the Board of Agriculture from the Northern Department*, York, 1808. He gives a table based on Tuke's figures of the waste and moor lands in the three ridings of Yorkshire.

<sup>4</sup> See Mantoux, *The Industrial Revolution in the Eighteenth Century*, 1928, Part II; Moffit, L. W., *England on the Eve of the Industrial Revolution*, London, 1925.

<sup>5</sup> Daniels, C. W., *The Early English Cotton Industry*, Manchester, 1920, p. 24.



growth of the industry in the early eighteenth century. In particular the wide-flung capitalistic commercial organization of the industry is emphasized. With the growth of the foreign market, we find Manchester merchants (who were also usually manufacturers at this period) conducting operations which involved the export of cotton goods all over the world.<sup>1</sup> Not until the end of the eighteenth century, however, did the cotton industry begin to assume aspects of machine and mass production in a purely modern sense. But after that date, its growth was noticeable even to contemporaries. Aiken described the growth of the industry from its inception with the manufacture of bad, mixed woollen materials, to its flourishing state in 1795 when he wrote.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, he boasted, that as a result of the expanding trade and industry in southern Lancashire, Manchester "has now in every respect assumed the style and manner of one of the commercial capitals of Europe."<sup>3</sup>

The woollen industry was distinctly localized in the West Riding. In the eighteenth century it occupied a fair space in the southwest of the country, bounded on the north by Keighley and Otley, on the east by Leeds and Wakefield, on the south by Huddersfield, and on the west by Oakworth, Sowerby, Sagland, and so on.<sup>4</sup> It consisted of two branches, the old woollen industry, carried on chiefly within the space enclosed between Leeds, Wakefield, Huddersfield and Halifax. Outside this area, especially to the west of Bradford and Halifax, was the stronghold of the worsted industry. The latter was a fairly recent innovation in Yorkshire, and was therefore the first branch to be organized in modern fashion, both because the tradition of the putting-out

<sup>1</sup> Wadsworth, A. P., and Mann, J. de L., *op. cit.*, Book III, especially the chapters describing in detail the history and operations of certain contemporary merchants and manufacturers.

<sup>2</sup> Aikin, J., *A Description of the County . . . Round Manchester*, 1798. See articles on Manchester and Lancashire.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 184. See also Wadsworth's description of the "growing wealth and population of Manchester and Liverpool," *op. cit.*, p. 241.

<sup>4</sup> Heaton, H., *The Yorkshire Woollen and Worsted Industries*, Oxford, 1920. See especially pp. 248, 249 and the map on p. 287. The latter part of the book, from Chapter IX on, deals entirely with the eighteenth century aspect of the industry's development.



system was not as firmly rooted, and because there was less invested capital in the older methods.

Until the eighteenth century the woollen industry was diffused over the country, with its main centres in the west, East Anglia, and Yorkshire. We have seen how the west flourished under its sway, until 1750, when it began to decline.<sup>1</sup> The same sort of decline was occurring in Norfolk and Suffolk, but the Yorkshire area began a steady expansion. Lipson quoted figures to show that the production of pieces of broadcloth and narrow cloth more than doubled between 1750 and 1790.<sup>2</sup> Allen described the industry as increasing noticeably after 1737, especially the worsted branch.<sup>3</sup> The localization of the woollen industry in the West Riding had begun.

Yet, the expansion at this period all took place while the industry was for the most part in the domestic stage. Power machinery was not used, except for preparing processes, down to 1790.<sup>4</sup> And apart from a few large shops in Leeds where twenty to fifty workers might be assembled, the processes were still carried on in the homes of the workers. There were scarcely twenty factories in the modern sense of the term in Yorkshire in 1800.<sup>5</sup> We must therefore conclude with Heaton that

“the Industrial Revolution had little more than its beginnings in the eighteenth century. The great change came first in the cotton industry, then in the manufacture of worsteds, and lastly in the making of woollen cloths. In the Yorkshire branches of the textile industry, the revolution did not actually take place until the nineteenth century; the face of Yorkshire had been little altered by 1800, and half a century had still to elapse before it could be claimed that the factory and the power-driven machinery had displaced the old hand methods.”<sup>6</sup>

In contrast, the coal industry had become capitalistic in its organization by the middle of the seventeenth century. Nef uses

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter III.

<sup>2</sup> Lipson, E., *The History of the Woollen and Worsted Industries*, p. 248.

<sup>3</sup> Allen, Thomas, *A New and Complete History of the County of Yorks*, London, 1828, p. 186.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 248.

<sup>5</sup> Heaton, *op. cit.*, p. 283. Under the putting-out system there were, however, rural factories, in the sense of collections of workers under one roof, although there was no power machinery.

<sup>6</sup> Heaton, *op. cit.*, pp. 283, 284.

as the criteria of capitalistic development the subdivision of labor and the dependency of the wage-earners. "The vast majority of all the workers engaged both in the mining and the transport of coal were hired for wages, and had come to depend for their living entirely upon the adventurers who employed them. There was no other British industry of equal importance which had advanced so far on the road to modern capitalism."<sup>1</sup> Nef considered that the development of merchants as a capitalist class in the coal industry facilitated the organization of capital in other trades in the eighteenth century, as well as supplying the capital. Certainly coal was a far more important industry in the eighteenth century than has frequently been realized. Because its sensational technical developments had taken place earlier, while those of cotton and wool occurred at this time, they have received the greatest attention. The development of the coal industry was absolutely essential to the Industrial Revolution and the widespread use of machinery. In turn the expansion of manufacture reacted on the coal industry and caused its extension in the late eighteenth century. According to Ashton, the coal industry was slow to use the steam engine and the growth of the industry depended more on the extension of markets than technical changes in the eighteenth century.<sup>2</sup>

There were many subsidiary industries in these growing industrial areas. Doncaster was famous for its knitting,<sup>3</sup> and Sheffield had long been known for its cutlery.<sup>4</sup> Liverpool was a flourishing commercial centre, upon which the cotton industry depended for its raw material. Young found Lancaster a prosperous commercial town which not only carried on a "brisk" trade, but manufactured cabinet ware to be exported to Africa and America.<sup>5</sup> The whole northern area which comes under our survey was, in the eighteenth century, in the process of economic and commercial expansion.

<sup>1</sup> Nef, J. U., *The Rise of the British Coal Industry*, 2 vols., London, 1932. See Part IV, especially pp. 347-349. This is a very scholarly and extremely able account of the growth of the British coal industry. See also Ashton and Sykes, *Coal Industry of the Eighteenth Century*, Manchester, 1929.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 5, 6, 12, 38 and 39. Also Mantoux, *op. cit.*, Part II, ch. III.

<sup>3</sup> Defoe, *Tour*, vol. III (1727), p. 79.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 85.

<sup>5</sup> Young, *Northern Tour*, vol. III, p. 196.

## CHAPTER V

### THE LABORER IN THE NORTH RIDING

THE most extensive information as to actual wage rates in agriculture may be derived from Young's *Northern Tour*, for the period around 1768. From the number of places for which he gives wage rates, representative samples of each geographical district have been selected.

	<i>1768</i> <sup>1</sup>				
	East (Kirby)	Centre (Scorton)	North (Rockby)	West (Craikhill)	So. East (Yedding- ham)
Harvest	9d. and board.	1s.3d. and milk.	2s. and victuals.	1s. and small beer.	1s.9d. and board.
Hay	9d. and board.	6d. and milk.	1s. and victuals.	1s. and small beer.	1s.3d. and board.
Winter	6d. and board.	1s.	8d. and victuals.	9d. or 10d.	10d. and board.

	<i>1794</i> <sup>2</sup>			
	East (No. Rydale)	Centre and North (North of Vale of Cleveland)	West (Western Moorlands)	So. East (South Rydale)
Harvest	....	.....	....	....
Hay	....	.....	1s. and meat	....
Mowing	....	.....	1s.6d. and meat	....
Winter	9d. to 1s. and meat	1s. to 1s.2d.	....	1s.3d. to 1s.8d.
Summer	1s.4d. and meat	1s.6d. to 2s.	....	2s. to 2s.6d.

It is very difficult to compare these figures, either geographically or in time, but, roughly speaking, it seems fairly clear that

<sup>1</sup> These figures are to be found in the *Northern Tour*, vol. II. Other places are given, but a statistical average is impossible, due to the fact that money wages are accompanied in various places by different perquisites, such as beer, milk, board, meat, etc. The most representative rates have been taken.

<sup>2</sup> These figures are from Tuke, *Survey of Agriculture of North Riding*, pp. 78, 79, and the divisions taken for comparison are those in which the places given by Young are located.

wages were comparatively low in the western moorlands and high in the southeast and north. Also some rise in rates appears to have taken place between 1768 and 1794. We shall discuss these points more critically, along with the problem of perquisites, after all the wages have been examined.

We are fortunately able to study one of these agricultural districts intensively for nearly 25 years during the century, from the entries in the account book of the Thornborough estate near Leyburn.<sup>1</sup> The accounts extend from 1749 to 1773, and give a very full record of the activities on the estate during that period. Not only are there detailed items for personal debts, tailors, dress-makers and the like, but the wages given to servants and laborers of all sorts are noted in full. The main interest of the owner was in the raising of sheep, and to judge from the fragmentary accounts of the sale of his wool, it was a profitable affair.<sup>2</sup> He did some breeding of horses, too, and noted occasionally the results of crossings, etc.<sup>3</sup>

It is fairly easy to disentangle the daily wages paid to the various laborers and their families, and the results may be observed in the table on the following page. Mowing at Leyburn was uniformly 1s. a day, and at Wanlass 1s.6d. The rate for greasing sheep did not change, and was 6d. a day, with meat, during the whole period. The other rates, however, exhibited a steady upward trend. Shearing (reaping) was done by both men and women, and in the case of men went from 10d. in 1752, to 9d. in 1758, and finally to 1s. in 1771; the women received 6d. a day until 1767, when the rate rose to 8d.

<sup>1</sup> I am greatly indebted to Miss Cicely F. Hildyard, of Scorton, Yorks, for allowing me to use this book, which has descended to her possession. She has been most kind in giving me information concerning the book and its origin. The material concerning the Thornborough estate has been published in the *Economic History Review*, June 1932.

<sup>2</sup> In Feb. 1765 he received £18.8.0 for 32 stone of wool (11s. 6d.), and in Dec. £17.12.0 for 32 stone and 80 fleeces (11s.). The 1767 sales were not so profitable. The price per stone was 11s. and 10s.6d. in June. "The time being bad," he gave one of his customers a rebate of 15s.6d., and another  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a stone—his total from the sales being £31.15.0 in all. In 1769 he sold his wool for "the last and the present year" at the same time and received in cash and a London bill, £26.4.11. See p. 127 in the Account Book.

<sup>3</sup> His concern with his horses is shown by items like this, for 1769 (p. 8), when he paid Miles Mason 6d. a day for 8 days "looking at the stallion."



# DAILY AGRICULTURAL WAGES ON THE THORNBOROUGH ESTATE NEAR LEYBURN, NORTH RIDING OF YORK

(Thornborough Accounts, from Miss C. F. Hilyard.)

Year.	Mowing. <sup>1</sup>	Shearing.		Ploughing.	Haying.				General. <sup>5</sup>	Cresting. <sup>6</sup>	Thrashing.	Hedging.	Clipping.	Cooper.	Stubbing.	Walling.	Skilling. <sup>7</sup>	Women's Work.	
		Man.	Woman. <sup>2</sup>		Man.	Woman. <sup>3</sup>	Boy. <sup>4</sup>	Girl.										Weeding.	Limekiln.
1749						6d., 8d.	2d., 4d.		8d.	6d.						1s. 2d. (man at quarry)			
1750	1s.		6d.	8d.	6d.	6d.	2d.	3d.	8d.	6d.	8d.						4d.	4d.	6d.
1751	1s.		6d.	8d.					8d.								4d.	4d.	6d.
1752	1s.	10d.	6d.	8d.		6d.	3d.		8d.	6d.	8d.	8d.				1s. 2d. (work at barn)	4d.	4d.	5d.
1753	1s.				10d.	6d.	3d.		8d.	6d.		8d.					4d.		6d.
1754	1s., 1s. 6d.					6d.	2d.		8d.								2d., 4d.		
1755	1s.					6d.	2d.		8d.								3d., 4d.		
1756	1s., 1s. 6d.					6d.	2d., 3d.		8d.								4d.		
1757	1s.					6d.			8d.										
1758	1s.	6d.	6d.	10d.		6d.			8d.										
1759	1s.					6d.			8d.										
1760	1s., 1s. 6d.			2d., boy		6d.		4d.	8d.										
1761	1s., 1s. 6d.		6d.			6d.		5d.	8d.										
1762	1s., 1s. 6d.					6d.			8d.										
1763	1s., 1s. 6d.					6d.			8d.										
1764	1s., 1s. 6d.					6d.			8d.										
1765	1s., 1s. 6d.					6d.			8d.										
1766	1s., 1s. 6d.					6d., 8d.			8d.							1s. 2d., 1s. 6d.			
1767	1s.		8d.	1s.	8d.	6d., 8d.			8d.										6d.
1768	1s.		8d.	1s.	10d.	8d.			8d., 10d.										6d.
1769	1s.					8d.			8d., 10d.						1s.				
1770	1s.					8d.			8d., 10d.					2s. 6d.					
1771	1s.	1s.			1s.	8d., 10d.	7d., 6d.		8d.										
1772	1s.				1s.	8d.			10d.										
1773																			
1774																			
1775																			

1. The 1s. 6d. rate is for work done on tithes, except in 1754, where it is for work in the meadow. In 1750, meat in addition is given at Wanlass, but only 1s. at Leyburn.

2. In 1752, a boy was paid 3d. for shearing one day.

3. In 1749 and 1750 the higher rate is for work at Wanlass, but in 1767 and after, the higher rate is a real time rise at Leyburn.

4. In 1749 the higher rate for work at Wanlass; and in 1752 meat is added.

5. From 1768-70 the 10d. rate occurs before Michaelmas, the 8d. after. 6. With meat.

7. In 1754 the 2d. rate is for a boy, the Glentons' son gets the usual 4d.



Haying was participated in by whole families, so that rates paid to men, women, boys and girls are noted. The men's wages for haying fluctuated between 8d. and 10d. until 1771, when 1s. was paid. In 1749 and 1750, women received 6d. for haying at Leyburn and 8d. at Wanlass. From then on, the figures all apply to Leyburn, with a steady rate of 6d. until 1766. In that and in the next year 8d. was paid as well as 6d., and in 1768 the wage was uniformly 8d. At this rate it continued, except for the rate of 10d. paid in 1770. Boys received 2d. or 3d. in the fifties, but 6d. or 7d. in 1771; girls 3d. in 1750, and 4d. or 5d. after that.

The fact that the reaping and haying rates are largely for women corroborates Marshall's statement to the effect that "Here, it is almost equally rare to see a sickle in the hand of a man; reaping — provincially 'shearing' — being almost entirely done by women".<sup>1</sup> To this practice, of which Marshall fully approved, he attributed all sorts of benefits:

"The number of hands is increased; the poor man's income is raised; the parish rates are in consequence lessened; and the community at large are benefited, by an increase of industry and an acquisition of health. . . . And the work of Harvest, so far from being thought a hardship, is, by women who have been bred to it, considered as a relaxation to domestic confinement, and less agreeable employments."<sup>2</sup>

This contrasts strangely with his remarks *against* the employment of women in the south.<sup>3</sup>

The Thornborough estate employed women not only for the harvest, but also for skailing (spreading manure),<sup>4</sup> weeding, stoning and working at the limekilns. Skailing was 4d. until 1768, and then 5d. Weeding rose from 4d. to 5d. in 1752, and was 6d. in 1762. 6d. was paid at the limekiln in the fifties, and for stoning in the sixties and seventies. Girls and boys sometimes assisted at these tasks, generally at a penny or two less per day. Purely men's jobs were threshing, hedging, ploughing, stubbing,

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 387.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 388, 389.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 54.

<sup>4</sup> It is interesting to learn (from Mr. Thornley) that this work is considered too laborious for women at the present time.

etc.— the scattered rates for which are listed in the table. They all show some increase during these 25 years.

The general, all-year-round work of the agricultural laborer was paid at anywhere from 8d. to 1s. per day. One man, William Glenton, received 8d. a day for this sort of work until 1768. Then he was paid 10d. before Michaelmas for the next three years, and finally 10d. altogether in 1771. Other men were paid at a somewhat higher rate; for example, one who received 10d., 1s., and 1s.2d. for various unidentified work from 1757 to 1762.<sup>1</sup>

It may be assumed that these rates were exclusive of board, except in the specific instances noted on the table, where such additional payment is stated. The fact that the accounts do not describe them as including board,<sup>2</sup> and that Young's wages for this district do not include board, make this fairly certain. But it does not dispose of the perquisite problem. We have noted before, in studying the agricultural districts of the south and west, the importance of perquisites to the laborers' standard of life. It was as true of the north as of the west that payments in kind were frequent. Young's wages often include beer or milk, if not board, and the existence of common rights has been mentioned previously.

The problem is very clearly illustrated by the detailed record of the above-mentioned William Glenton, who was evidently one of the proprietor's tenants and regular laborers. Every single year for which accounts were given includes many items for the work of Glenton, his wife, and his boy. They are somewhat complex and difficult to follow, especially as the landlord was continually loaning Glenton money, or advancing his wages, and paying him in kind. It is not easy to tell how much of these loans and advances were deducted from his wages, although the fact is sometimes noted, so that any yearly estimate of his earnings is extremely dubious. We shall, however, attempt such estimates later on. Much of his wage was given in food, which the landlord allowed him at reduced prices. Mutton and beef

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 995-1000 for accounts of the employment of John Haykin.

<sup>2</sup> Except in the case of greasing, which is described as 6d. and meat in Glenton's account for 1749. The "meat" probably meant board, or at least the mid-day meal.

occur regularly in the accounts,<sup>1</sup> and there are noted payments in butter,<sup>2</sup> and a deduction for a scythe.<sup>3</sup> In 1749, when Glenton wassick, his landlord sent him 5s.8d., and his wife lent Anne Glenton a half-a-crown in both February and March.<sup>4</sup> Various loans of a guinea or more occur frequently in the accounts, and their full amount does not always seem to have been deducted from Glenton's wage.

An estimate of the annual earnings of the Glenton family is difficult because the items for any one year are quite obviously fragmentary. Anne Glenton evidently worked during harvest time, but her wages were not noted every year, and it is not clear whether this is due to the fact that she actually did not work, or to the omission of the record. The probability is that she did work and the account was listed separately.<sup>5</sup> In 1758 the Glenton boy enters the accounts, and was employed at skailing, ploughing and various odd jobs. He, too, is not listed every year, although he must have worked. The following is a sample account for both Glenton and his wife for the year 1753:

Jan. 20th	Wm. Glenton 20 days Greasing	10.0
	49 days att other work	1.12.8
March 17th	Wm. Glenton 42 and half Days	1. 8.4
May 12th	Wm. Glenton 42 days and $\frac{1}{2}$	1. 8.4
June 17th	Wm. Glenton 29 days	19.4
July 28th	Wm. Glenton had been at work without his mowing 27 days	18.0
Oct. 18th	Pd. Ann Glenton for 55 days for 13 days mowing	1.16.8 13.0
Dec. 13th	Accounted with W. Glenton and paid him for 16 days Greasing att 6d.	8.0
	and for 44 days at 8d.	18.0
	of which paid him in Money 14.0 and he allow'd in part for the Qr. of the Bull 10s.8d. and paid for ye Mutton he had Dec. 9th 1.6 which have crossed out.	

<sup>1</sup> Examples: 1750—a quarter of Lamb and a quarter of Mutton—2.0.  
1751—12.11d. deducted for Beef.  
1754—10s.10d. “deducted in part for the Quarter of the Bull.”  
1756—a loin of veal deducted.  
1769—2s.2d. deducted for mutton.

<sup>2</sup> 1750—“pd. Wm. Glenton in money and 2 pounds of Butter 10s.10d.”

<sup>3</sup> May 23, 1754—“Note he owes 10s. for Beef and 3.6 a scythe.”

<sup>4</sup> See account for 1749.

<sup>5</sup> In the separate lists of women haymakers her name sometimes occurs.

According to the account Glenton and his wife earned £10.12.4 during 1753, all but 11s.6d. of which they received in money. Probably the remark about the mowing in July indicates the omission of the mowing payment in the account, in which case the earnings would be considerably increased. It is not unreasonable, at any rate, to assume that Glenton and his wife between them earned approximately £11.0.0 in 1753.

Their annual earnings (in money and food), derived from accounts similar to the above, are listed below, divided according to the source of the income:

	<i>Glenton</i>	<i>Wife</i>	<i>Boy</i>	<i>Total</i>
1750	£ 9.18.0			9.18.0
1	£ 6. 5.4			6. 5.4
2	£ 5.19.0			5.19.0
3	£ 8.15.8	1.16.8		10.12.4
4	£ 8. 0.2½	1. 0.6		9. 0.8½
5	£ 6. 7.0	1. 2.0		7. 9.0
6	£ 4.12.10			4.12.10
7	£ 5.16.4			5.16.4
8	£ 8.12.0		17.3	9. 9.3
9	£ 7. 5.8		1. 5.4	8.11.0
1760	£10. 5.6		1. 6.6	11.12.0
1	£ 8.13.10		1.16.4	10.10.2
2	£10.17.4			10.17.4
3	£ 9. 0.10			9. 0.10
4	£ 8.13.1			8.13.1
5	£ 8.12.8			8.12.8
6	£ 7. 1.4			7. 1.4
7	£ 8.13.4			8.13.4
8	£ 9. 1.3			9. 1.3
9	£ 9. 2.9			9. 2.9
1770	£ 7. 9.8			7. 9.8

These figures can only be taken as very rough indications of what the family earned. A great deal was paid in advance and generally deducted later from the amount due.<sup>1</sup> Glenton seems to have been in the continual state of paying off, bit by bit, what he had borrowed previously, in somewhat analogous fashion to the present day laborer under the instalment plan. Besides the food (mostly meat) which he bought from his employer and which was usually deducted from his money wages before they were

<sup>1</sup> The amount advanced and the amount paid do not always check with the sum which *should* be paid according to the daily rate. Any odd change was always made in favor of Glenton.



paid, there was his rent, for which the same was done. This amounted to two guineas a year and was paid usually in half-yearly instalments, at Lady Day and Michaelmas.

From these rough totals it appears, in the first place, that the total earnings in the sixties appear to have been on a somewhat higher level, despite the fact that the known help of the woman and boy came for the most part in the fifties. Secondly, the work of the wife or child added anywhere from £1 to £2 per annum. Glenton, by himself alone, could earn from about £6 to £11 and, on an average, between £8 and £9.<sup>1</sup> This was higher than the wage given to the most highly paid man-servants £7.7.0.<sup>2</sup> Glenton's average, however, was lower than the £10.8.0 which was paid John Andrew yearly, from 1751 to 1753, although it is not any higher than what Glenton could do, and the probability is that he approached that amount fairly regularly.<sup>3</sup> It is not stated what Andrew did for his wages, but that he was not a house servant is indicated by his buying wheat and massagen from his employer in 1752. In 1753 he was employed at "looking at the ground," hedging, etc. He may have been a simple farm servant who lived out, or something of that sort. At any rate, he seems more comparable to Glenton than a house servant.

There is excellent reason to think that Glenton was quite typical of the agricultural laborer in the western moorlands. His daily wages were about the same as those cited by Young and Marshall, and were representative of those paid to other laborers on the Thornborough estate. With the proviso that the moorlands comprised a low rate area,<sup>4</sup> and that Glenton was perhaps fortunate in having a liberal employer, he may be taken to represent in some degree the agricultural laborer of the north. We see him making, at a conservative estimate, about £9.0.0 a year,

<sup>1</sup> The median of all the items is the 1766 rate of £8.12.8.

<sup>2</sup> William Parvin in 1767, William Richardson in 1770, and Richard Chapelhow in 1771 to 1773. One woman received seven guineas, a May Tote, from 1770 to 1773.

<sup>3</sup> Especially, if, as seems obvious from the small number of days worked, the low totals are due to the fact that some items are missing.

<sup>4</sup> See above p. 149. This will be developed more fully later, in connection with the building trade wages.



with a pound or two extra through the work of his wife or child. He was given the opportunity to buy meat and dairy products from his master. When he or any of his family were ill, his master sent him money, or other assistance. He could borrow in advance of his wages when he needed, and in other respects could use his employer as a sort of bank. At harvest his whole family turned out to help, and at other intervals during the year his wife and children added to the family earnings. With the addition of rights of fuel and grazing on the common wastes (which are not mentioned in the Thornborough accounts) we can draw from this account of Glenton and his family a clear picture of the agricultural laborer in the moorlands and possibly in the whole northern area.<sup>1</sup>

The wages at Thornborough in general are comparable not only with the local rates of Young's in the above table, but with Marshall's general figures. He stated that day wages during harvest were, for a woman, 10d., and for a man, 2s.<sup>2</sup> These figures are, again, higher than the Thornborough rates, but the difference is quite comprehensible on the previous assumption of a customary lower rate on the western moors. The same holds for the wages in limekilns, which are quoted by Marshall as 1s.6d. at Malton, and 1s.8d. at Pickering;<sup>3</sup> whereas in 1749 a man at Thornborough received 1s. for quarrying.<sup>4</sup> From another source the Thornborough wages are verified. A letter from Askrigg mentions "a poor fellow who works for ten-pence a day"<sup>5</sup> which was the rate paid to men for haying, and to Glenton for general work three years later.

All these wages were the fruit of long hours each day. The men worked from daylight to dusk in winter, and from six to six in summer. The women kept the same hours, when they worked, except

<sup>1</sup> The money wage in other parts of the country was higher, but in general living conditions, employment and relation to his employer, Glenton was probably fairly typical.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 388.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 346.

<sup>4</sup> See table on p. 50.

<sup>5</sup> *Museum Rusticum*, vol. IV, 1765—a letter from T. Scott of Askrigg, p. 370.

that they began several hours later in the morning, usually at eight o'clock.<sup>1</sup>

We have seen that the highest yearly wage paid by the landlord was £10.8.0 to a man who may have been a head servant, or a more responsible farm laborer. His usual wage to a man servant was seven guineas. In the case of one Edward Handy, however, his wages were to be £4 in 1758. He was allowed, besides, a half guinea for both a hat and washing, and one guinea, because "having no occasion for to buy him a frock."<sup>2</sup> His wages were in that year, therefore, about six guineas. They came to £5.1.0 the next year, and his wife earned another guinea. Another man servant is noted as receiving five guineas a year. The wages of the women servants were relatively high. We have mentioned the seven-guinea wage to one woman, and another received £6, and still another £5.10.0.<sup>3</sup>

According to Marshall an "able" manservant was paid anywhere from £12 to £18 a year.<sup>4</sup> This was in the Pickering district. Tuke distinguished between the arable and moorland country — the former paying £16 for a head man, and £6 or £7 for a woman; whereas in the moors "£12 per annum is esteemed great wages for a head man," and £4 or £5 for a woman.<sup>5</sup> Our Thornborough proprietor seems to have under paid his men-servants and over paid his women, if we consider Tuke's figures at all typical of the county rates in general.

In connection with the above description of the Thornborough estate, and the different kinds of work thereon, it is interesting to observe the duties of a general servant on another Yorkshire estate somewhat earlier in the century (1704). One of the entries in the note book of Sir Walter Calverley, Bart., runs as follows:<sup>6</sup>

"28th Augt. Agreed with Joseph Mawde to serve me one year from this day, for which he is to have 5 l., and 20s. to buy him a frock with for

<sup>1</sup> Tuke, *op. cit.*, pp. 78, 79. In one district (between Easingwold and Thirsk) the summer hours were from seven to five, instead of six to six.

<sup>2</sup> *Thornborough Accounts*, p. 107.

<sup>3</sup> The first Mary Elston in 1768; the second Elizabeth Elwood from 1769 to 1772.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 259.

<sup>5</sup> Tuke, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

<sup>6</sup> Published in *Yorkshire Diaries in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, 1886, by the Surtees Society, vol. II, p. 102.

brewing, and a livery, vizt., coat, waistcoat, breeches, hat, and stockings, and his employment is to be, to look to all the stables, and horses, and mares, both in the house and pastures, to keep the fold clean, and also the pheasant garden and little garden within the pales in the fold, and see the trees be therein nailed anytime as occasion, and also to keep the court before the hall door clean, and grass places in good order, and also to brew master all his drink, to keep the jack in order, to take care of the calash and drive it, to keep the boat carefully locked, cleaned, and dressed, to wait at the table when occasion, and, if he does not his best, but neglects these things, to have no wages."

It is to be observed that while 20s. bought a frock and complete livery in 1704, that 54 years later, the Thornborough employer gave one of his servants a guinea in lieu of a frock alone. Comparing this with the Thornborough wages, it is evident that servants were receiving from 80 to 100 per cent more at the later date. We shall attempt further on to estimate whether the increase was real or merely sufficient to cover the decreasing value of money.

From this brief survey of scattered wage data and its comparison with the valuable entries of the Thornborough estate, it is clear that not only William Glenton, but all the servants and laborers on the Thornborough estate were fairly representative of rural conditions, at least, in the west of the North Riding. We may draw a more concrete portrait of the agricultural laborer's work and living conditions in the north, largely because of the existence of this battered account book.

#### THE GENERAL LABORER

Along with the wages of purely agricultural labor, may be put the wages of workers on the roads and buildings and bridges of the North Riding. The same is true here as of the west and the agricultural districts of the home counties; that the members of the building trades were at once the group most representative of the general country laborer, and nearest in type to the agricultural laborer proper. Especially is it true of the northern area under examination where the comparatively great extent of the territory, and the number of rivers and mountains, necessitated a constant care of the many bridges, and the roads. The con-

tinual bills for extensive work on county bridges and roads, which occur in the Sessions records<sup>1</sup> are evidence of the large amount of work to be done. A numerous staff of laborers and journey-men seem to have been constantly employed.<sup>2</sup> In the north the interest in roads was particularly keen, due to the experiments of MacAdam,<sup>3</sup> and the care of the roads correspondingly better. It is highly probable, therefore, that a sample laborer in the North Riding, if he did not give all of his time to agriculture, worked part of the year on the roads. The combination of the two varieties of work was common, too, as we shall see later.

The median wages of the laborers in the North Riding are sketched in the chart (26). A division between laborers who worked on roads and bridges, and on buildings, has been made, purely on statistical grounds. After 1770, the trend of the wages for laborers on buildings lags by some ten or fifteen years behind the other wages. Up to that time, however, the scattered figures of the building wages coincide with those given for work on the roads and bridges. Whether or not this difference in trend is connected with differences in place (the building wages are for Thirsk, Northallerton and Richmond; the others apply to places all over the county) or in quality of the work performed, it is impossible to say. The difference, however, is obviously present.

Before 1730, the wages of the laborers on roads are represented by only one quotation, but after 1730 the medians are based on a fairly large number of samples, especially after 1750. In 1702 the rate given was 8d. During the thirties the daily wages varied between 10d. and 1s.2d., 11d. representing, probably, a fair approximation. The forties are poorly represented; only two rates, that of 8d. and 10d. being given. In the fifties the wage varied between 10d. and 1s.2d.—1s. quite evidently being the

<sup>1</sup> There are a particularly large number in the *North Riding Sessions Papers*. In the West Riding, a surveyor for the whole county was appointed early in the century, at a lump sum, so that separate bills are rare. This in itself is indicative of the large amount of work to be done. The Lancashire bills are also numerous.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Tuke's comment: "Perhaps in no district in the kingdom, of equal extent, are the bridges maintained by the Riding, commonly called county bridges, equally numerous or better attended to; . . ." (quoted in Marshall's *Review of Reports . . . of the Northern Department*. York, 1808, p. 446).

<sup>3</sup> See Mantoux.



usual rate. The 1s. rate was continuous until 1765, when 1s.2d. became the general rate. The rise is comparatively fast in the seventies — from 1s.2d. to 1s.7d. in eight years. But in 1786 a new high point, 1s.8d., was attained. Our figures go no further.

The general trend may perhaps be stated, very broadly, as follows: Between 8d. and 1s. until 1750; 1s. until 1765; 1s.2d. until 1771; then a progressive rise to 1s.4d., 1s.6d., 1s.7d., and

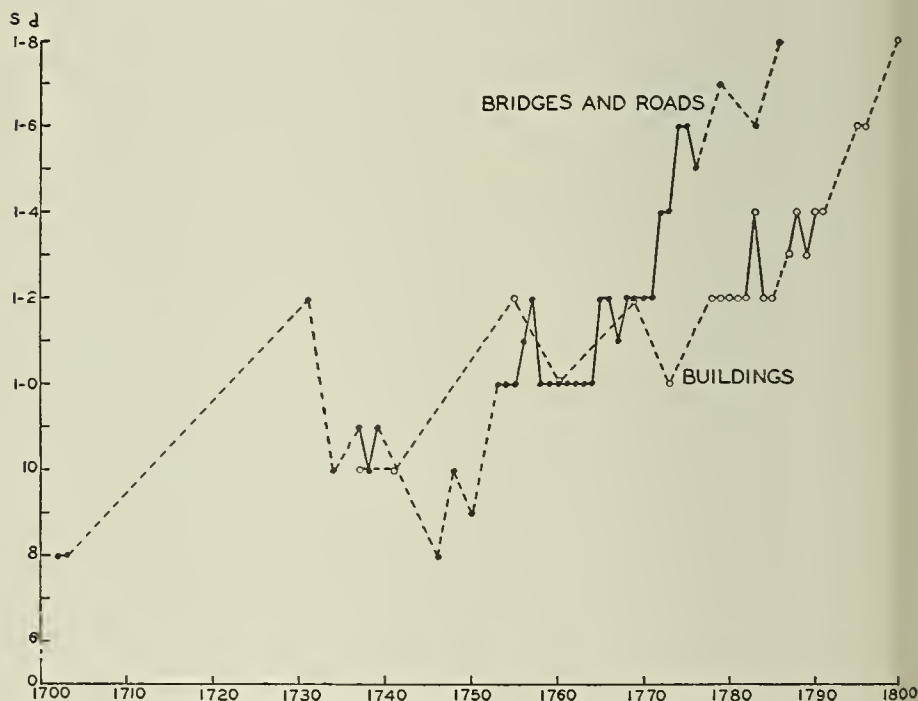


CHART 26—MEDIAN WAGES OF LABOR, NORTH RIDING OF YORKSHIRE

1s.8d. in the seventies and eighties. The increase was not without set-backs, but all the evidence shows that it was very real. The building wages follow this trend until 1770. During the seventies 1s. and 1s.2d. are quoted; in the eighties the rate fluctuated between 1s.2d. and 1s.4d., and the upward sweep to 1s.8d. did not occur until the nineties. It is interesting to note, however, that the trend of the building rates, from 1778 to 1800, almost exactly parallels that of the wages for road work during the period 1760 to 1786.



The use of similar wage figures in the previous chapters has called forth a discussion of the many sources of error involved. As before, the writer has endeavored to eliminate errors due to quality from inspection of the bills, and the omission of rates obviously applying to master craftsmen, boys, or old men, or clearly in opposition to the rate usually paid over a short period of time at a certain place. The task is almost impossible, however, and many of the variations in the median curve must still be due to differences in the quality of the work performed.

Many more must result from the large number of places included. The North Riding is the largest region we have yet studied, and its topography made for greater regional differences than in the south. Many of the moor and dale districts were in almost complete isolation, owing both to the greater distances to be covered and the difficulty of communication, which was, however, surprisingly improved at the end of the century. Marshall found the roads immeasurably better in the eighties, when he was writing his survey.<sup>1</sup>

The number of places to which the bills for the repair of county roads and bridges referred totalled 78. Some of these places were mentioned only once; others quite continuously throughout the century. Some idea of the regional differences may be gleaned from Chart 27. The series are all for separate places within the county. Several attempts were made to allocate the differences according to regional or statistical criteria — with no exact success. It was obvious, however, from an examination of the various series (and the charts of individual series substantiate the view), that some were constantly at a lower level than others. By listing the places which paid the highest and lowest rates each year, it was found that certain places definitely fell in the high and low groups. Masham, Burn, Croft, Catterick, Wath, Scawton, Richmond, Yore, and Skeeby Bridges were constantly at the low level; How, Pickering, Reeth, Northaller-

<sup>1</sup> *Op cit.*, vol. I, chapter on Roads. He says (p. 180) "THE SPIRIT of improvement has, in no particular, made greater exertions, than in the forming of Roads. Within my own remembrance, all the roads of the District lay in their *natural* form; that is, in a state of flatness, . . . Now there is scarcely a flat road, or a hollow way, left in the country."

ton, Sleights, and Grinton, at the high. With one exception, this statistical division is also a geographical one. The low rate

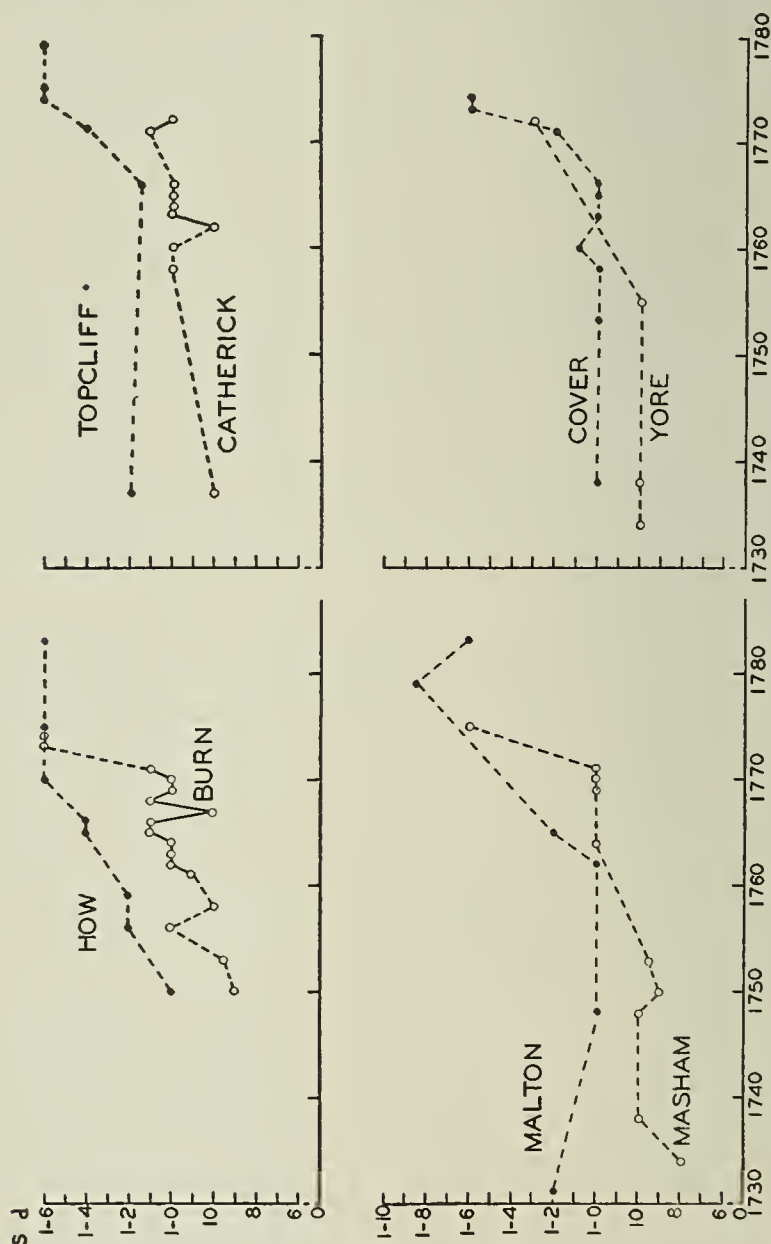


CHART 27—WAGES OF LABOR, NORTH RIDING OF YORKSHIRE

bridges are all from the district of the western moors with the exception of Scawton. The high rate ones are primarily from the southeastern part of the county, near the East Riding; the

exceptions are Reeth (west), Northallerton (central), and Grinton (west). A division of all the places according to a joint statistical and geographical standard, proved unsatisfactory, as so many of the places were quoted only once or twice.

A return to the individual series revealed that certain bridges had fairly continuous quotations of wage rates, and were at the same time excellent examples of the high and low rate groups: Malton and How for the former; Masham and Burn for the latter. The two series taken together are given below. (Chart 28)

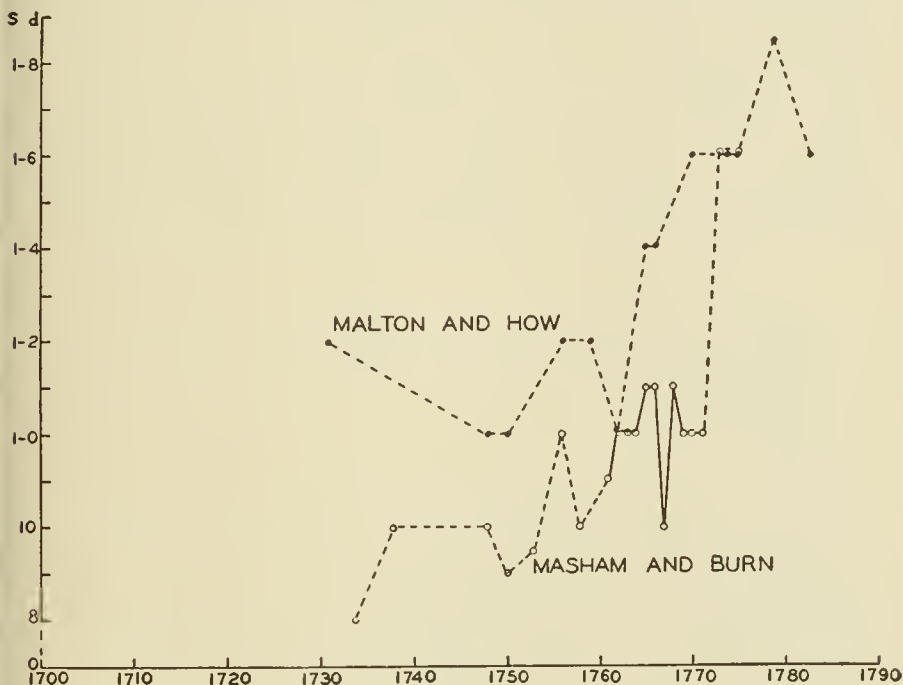


CHART 28—LOW AND HIGH WAGES IN THE NORTH RIDING

The two series show the same trend, with a constant difference of about 2d. between them, until the sixties. During this period the upper curve advanced more sharply. In the seventies, however, both curves come together, at the rate of 1s.6d.

Although the bridges selected as the best examples of the low and high wage groups do represent geographical districts,<sup>1</sup> a

<sup>1</sup> Malton and How bridges are in the east, on the border of the East Riding. The two low rate bridges are in the western part of the county, near Leyburn, on the edge of the moors.

division of the 78 places was made according to statistical standards alone. They were placed in the high or low rate groups, according as they tended to the level of the medians on the preceding page. It proved a more satisfactory method of grouping the series than the mixed geographical and statistical method tried and abandoned previously. Any places for which the evidence was not unmistakable were omitted, as well as many for which only one quotation of wages existed. Statistically speaking, 15 places were assigned to the low rate groups, and 21 to the high, while ten places, with fairly continuous items, clearly came between the extreme levels.

These groups may now be examined geographically with more accuracy. All but two of the bridges or towns thus grouped were located by the aid of contemporary maps.<sup>1</sup> The following table divides these wage series according to geographical districts.

<i>Low Wages (15)</i>		<i>High Wages (21)</i>	
West of Northallerton (including moors and Richmond)	10	East	10
North East (near Rudby on edge of moors)	2	Northallerton and vicinity	5
Central (near Northallerton)	2	West	6
Unknown	1		

It is clear from this table that there were at least three distinct regional areas for the payment of wages in the North Riding. The western moors as far north as Richmond, make up approximately two-thirds of the low wage group; the eastern parts of the county (the three Eastern divisions) comprise fifty per cent of the high wage group; and the northeastern area (near Hutton Rudby) although represented by only two quotations, was included in the low wage group. It is to be noted at once that these divisions correspond to the one observed previously in connection with Young's agricultural wages, and are therefore doubly confirmed.

We are on less firm ground in the area of which Northallerton is the centre. The district is divided between the high and low

<sup>1</sup> Maps of Yorkshire—Browne's, 1777; Dix, 1820; Laurie and Whittle's, 1827—in the British Museum.

wage groups, and although Northallerton itself, and places to the east, were in the high rate area, other places on the west of the town were in the low rate group. That this area represents a middle ground between the high and low wage rates is further evidenced by the fact that five of the ten medium series are in this group.

The question of regional variation has been dealt with at some length because of its statistical importance. We found similar regional divergences in Gloucestershire, and throughout the west in general. In the North Riding, we have not yet come across evidence as to metropolitan areas, such as clearly existed about Exeter, Bristol and Oxford, or London, the prime example. Possibly figures for York, which we have not procured, would indicate a similar metropolitan tendency. There seems almost no doubt, however, that wages in the moorlands, especially to the west of the county, were at a lower level than those of the eastern district.

These regional variations, however, came to an end in the seventies. Both the low and the high rate areas shared in the rise to 1s.6d. which then occurred throughout the Riding. (See Charts 27 and 28.) Only the laborers who worked on the county jails, in Thirsk, Northallerton and Richmond, do not appear to have taken part in the upward movement. Whether the reason for their lower wage lies in some such fact, as that the increased demand for more and better roads drew away all the best laborers at a higher rate, leaving only the old and infirm to repair the county buildings, at a lower wage, we can only conjecture. However, the disappearance of regional differences toward the end of the century is quite in line with the situation about London, where the same sort of thing occurred.

A comparison of the above charts shows plainly the extent of the errors due to lack of sufficient samples in the general median for the county. Up to 1770 the low rate wage group quite clearly dominated the median. Some attempt will be made in the concluding chapter to indicate the trend for each area over which a rate prevailed, and to allow for such errors in a general average series for the north as a whole.



The wages of the journeymen are even more difficult to handle statistically, for here the differences in the quality of the work performed were greater. The master craftsmen who hired the laborers and journeymen received a much higher wage than their journeymen (sometimes as much as 6d. more) as a rule, although they were paid occasionally at the same rate. As the masters were frequently not designated on the bills, it is hard to tell whether a rate applied to a master or to a journeyman, particularly when the place or the rate was only mentioned once or twice. Careful inspection of the bills, however, showed that a 2s. rate, wherever

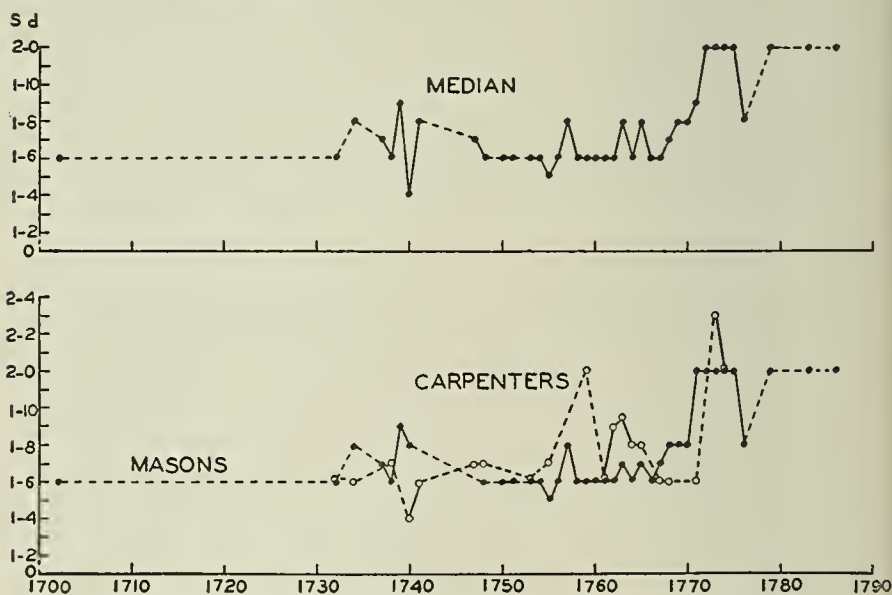


CHART 29—CRAFTSMEN'S WAGES, NORTH RIDING OF YORKSHIRE

quoted, before 1750, was likely to apply to master craftsmen, and that rate was consequently omitted from the median. After 1750, the matter was more complex. Journeymen in some places seemed to receive a wage of 2s. and rates varying from 2s.2d. to 2s.6d. appear to have been given the more skilled workmen. In the seventies, journeymen's wages were certainly 2s. and probably more, as 2s.2d., 2s.4d., and 2s.6d. rates appear to have applied to journeymen as well as master craftsmen.

The median series of masons and carpenters (see Chart 29) are the result of an attempt to eliminate the wages of master

craftsmen, and therefore apply only to the wages of journeymen. The elimination of quality differences, it is to be repeated, can only be approximate, especially after 1750, so that the series, particularly over short periods, cannot be taken as exact. Roughly speaking, however, the median wage fluctuated about a level of 1s.6d. up to 1765, with occasional rises (as in the forties) to 1s.8d. In 1768, a firm upward movement began, going steadily from 1s. 6d. to 1s.8d., 1s.9d., and to 2s. in 1772. The 2s. rate then continued, as far as the figures were available, or until 1786. The masons' and carpenters' wages were very similar, tending towards 1s.6d. until 1760. The carpenters' wages fluctuated somewhat more vigorously above and below this level than the masons' wages. The sharp rise to 2s.3d. occurred in 1773, and the rate fell after that to 2s. In the main, despite being based on many less samples, the median of carpenters' wages follows that of the masons.

The distinctive feature of the masons' wages, according to this chart, is the practically continuous rate of 1s.6d. until 1760, and the abrupt rise to a new level within the next ten years. Is this situation representative of the county? Are regional differences to be found in these wages, as in the wages of laborers? No such exhaustive analysis as in the case of the laborers has been made, but certain series, corresponding to those selected as typical of the low and high wage groups, have been studied. Masons' wages at Masham and Burn; and at Malton and How, have been charted below. (Chart 30)

Judging from the rates paid at these bridges, which were typical of the low and high wage areas of laborers' rates, the regional division was not as sharp in the case of the journeymen. 1s.6d. was paid at Malton and How, on the southeast border, as late as the fifties, and also at Masham and Burn in the west. It is quite clear, indeed, from the individual bills, that 1s.6d. was a wage fairly typical of the county until about 1750. The chief distinction between various parts of the county seems to lie in the fact that between 1750 and 1770 wages went up (as, for instance, at How and Malton) in some places, and remained the same in others, such as Burn and Masham, where the 1s.6d.

wage was paid until 1770. With this difference, the low and high wage groups appear to apply, although to a lesser extent, to the same geographical areas as for laboring wages. The Topcliff wage was always on a higher level,<sup>1</sup> and the wages at

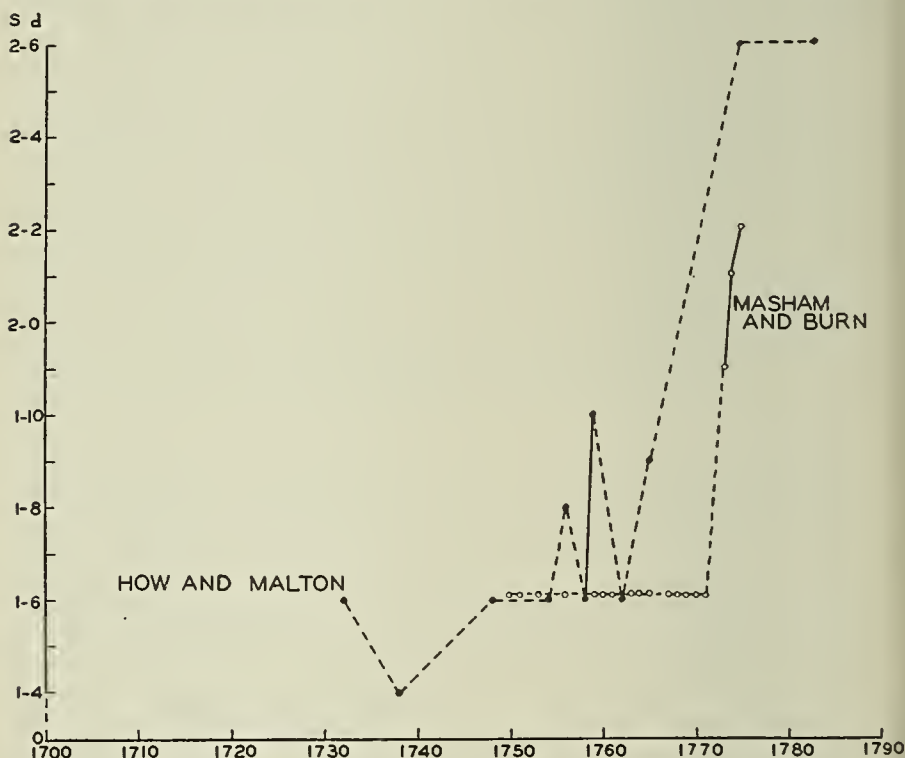


CHART 30—LOW AND HIGH CRAFTSMEN'S WAGES, NORTH RIDING OF YORKSHIRE

Morton, although largely 1s.6d. until 1770, made several jumps to 1s.8d. (in 1734 and 1759), quite consistent with Morton's position in the median group. (See Chart 31 of individual series.)

Two points emerge from the examination of the wages of craftsmen. In the first place, regional differences existed hardly at all for the master craftsmen. Wherever they worked they were generally paid 2s. per day before 1750, and an amount varying from 2s.2d. to 2s.6d. after that. Even in the case of the journey-

<sup>1</sup> It is not certain whether the 2s.6d. rate at Topcliff and How is for journeymen. In fact, the exact amount of the rise in the seventies for journeymen's wages cannot be stated exactly, owing to the previously discussed confusion between masters and journeymen in the bills.

men, wages varied less throughout the county. The reason for this is quite clear, at least for the master craftsmen. They were frequently the surveyors of hundreds, skilled workmen from the towns, who were in charge of the repairs for an extensive district. They would do any particularly difficult job in various localities all over the county at the same rate. For ordinary repairs local

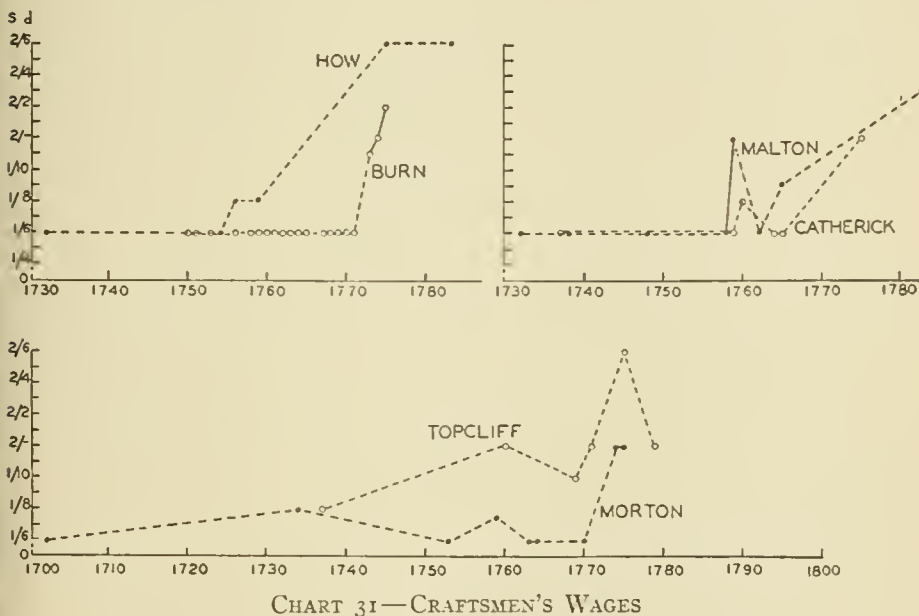


CHART 31—CRAFTSMEN'S WAGES

workmen and local wages were quite good enough. This conclusion is based on the fact that the highest rates throughout a large area were often paid to one man<sup>1</sup> for several years running, whereas the journeymen's names ordinarily varied with the place. Greater mobility than among laborers and the fact that they were often skilled town workmen who worked all over the county probably explains the lesser degree of variation in journeymen's wages.

The second fact of interest is the identity of wages paid to carpenters and masons. At How, Masham, and Burn, carpenters and masons received the same rate at least until 1770,<sup>2</sup> and in

<sup>1</sup> For example, William Peacock is listed regularly at the highest rate in the western district.

<sup>2</sup> There are no carpenters rates given for these places after 1771, though the trend of carpenters' wages followed that of the masons. The exception is the carpenters' rate for work on county buildings, which remained 1s.6d. in the eighties, not rising until the nineties.

general the two crafts received the same remuneration. That all the crafts were paid at practically the same rate, may be concluded from the similarity of the bricklayers' wages.<sup>1</sup> It might be expected that the differentiation between crafts would be small in the country. A contemporary pamphlet stated that the country workman was frequently a man of all work, as opposed to the rigid distinctions between the London crafts.<sup>2</sup> Correspondingly the quality of the work was worse. The importance of this fact for us, however, lies in its enabling us to take the median of the two series as representative of craftsmen's wages as a whole, thus procuring more continuous items.

We have now examined in considerable detail the money wages of general laborers and craftsmen in one of the largest agricultural districts of the north. The reason for this minute study will appear as we progress. Before real wages can be discussed, of course, some approximation of money wages, as accurate as the figures will permit, must be secured as a basis. Further than that, the analysis of a purely agricultural district affords a standard of comparison by which the influence of the industrial growth of the north may be gauged. The North Riding itself had no industry except such home industries as the weaving of wool, spinning of flax, and knitting, carried on by the women. One might expect, therefore, that the wages of agricultural and general laborers would be somewhat lower than in Lancashire and the West Rid-

<sup>1</sup> For work on county buildings at Thirsk, Northallerton and Richmond:

"Man" "Self"			"Self"	"Man" "Self"		
1737	1s.6d.	1s.6d.	1773	2s.	1787	2s.
1741	1s.6d.	1s.8d.	1778	2s.	1788	2s.
1769	1s.6d.	2s.	1779	2s.	1790	2s.
1770	1s.9d.	2s.	1780-3	2s.	1791	2s.
1772	1s.4d.	2s.	1784	2s.	1795	2s.6d.
			1785	2s.	1796	2s.6d.
					1800	2s.6d.

<sup>2</sup> Braddon, Lawrence, *The Miseries of the Poor*, London, 1717, p. 116. "In the country it is common for the same Man to work as a *House-Carpenter*, a *Joiner*, a *Turner*, a *Sawyer*, a *Wheelwright*, and a *Mill-Wright*. But no three Country Carpenters, of so many trades, shall in one day, in either of these Trades, do so much Work, or his Work so well, as two *London Workmen*, who are only employed in one of these."



ing, where the flourishing development of the cotton and wool industries increased the demand for labor and raised its price. At any rate, the effect of industrial influence may more easily be measured with the purely agricultural situation understood. Money wages in Lancashire and the West Riding will therefore be the subject of the next chapter.

The course of money wages in the North Riding may be briefly summarized as follows: All wages, both in agriculture and the building trades, exhibited a strongly-marked upward trend. The rise was less sharp in agriculture, although it is apparent, even from Young's and Tuke's scattered figures, that it occurred. From the accounts of 25 years on the Thornborough estate, it is clear that wages rose for general work from 8d. to 10d., the rise beginning in 1768, the same period when the rise in the building trade wage started. The estimated annual earnings of Glenton were somewhat higher in the sixties than the fifties. Agricultural wages were undoubtedly rising to some extent from 1780 on.

The extent of the rise in the building trade wages is surprising. Between 1700 and 1786 the wages of laborers went from 8d. and 10d. to 15.8d.—at least doubled. The upward movement in journeymen's rates was not as striking,—from 15.6d. to 2s. certainly, and to 2s.6d. in some cases. The extent of the rise is, as has been stated, obscured by the admixture of quality influences. The greater part of the rise took place from 1765 onwards, for both laborers and craftsmen. Before this period the laborers' rates were slowly moving upward, but the journeymen's wages were quite stable.

The wage areas, indicated by statistical grouping of the data, included a high rate district in the southeast, where laborers' wages were 1s. from 1730 to 1750, 1s.2d. in the fifties, 1s.4d. in the sixties, 1s.6d. and 1s.8d. in the seventies. The main low wage area comprised the western moorlands, with a small district to the north of the eastern moors. Here, rates below 1s. persisted well into the fifties; the 1s. wage was mainly characteristic of the sixties, and the rise to 1s.6d. in the seventies was correspondingly more abrupt. A middle group of places, mostly north of Richmond and around Northallerton, fluctuated between these two

tendencies. The upward trend to 1s.6d. in the seventies was, however, shared by all districts. Regional variations in journey-men's wages were less marked, though on the same lines as in the case of the laborers. Here, too, the main upward movement occurred after 1765.

When all the inaccuracies and sources of error in the data have been allowed for (the medians for any one year or over short periods of several years are undoubtedly untrustworthy, as indicative of changes over time) the fact of a slight but steady upward trend, with an abrupt rise after 1765, remains. Whether or not this represents as well an increase in real wages and standards of living remains to be seen. The question will be discussed for the whole of the northern area when the money wages of Lancashire and the West Riding have been examined.

## CHAPTER VI

### WAGES IN LANCASHIRE AND THE WEST RIDING

FOR agricultural wages in these two sections of the North, Young's *Northern Tour* must again serve as the chief authority. As far as the West Riding is concerned, the rates noted were entirely for the southern section of the county. These, plus those given later by Rennie, are summarized in the following tables.

1768 <sup>1</sup>			
		<i>South</i>	<i>Kiddell</i> (Nr. Tadcaster)
Harvest		1s. and board	1s. and board
Hay		1s. and board	1s.4d.
Winter		1s. and drinks	1s.
1793 <sup>2</sup>			
		<i>Harewood</i> (Nr. Tadcaster)	<i>North of Leeds</i>
Year round	1s.6d. to 2s.	1s.6d. (minimum)	1s.6d. to 2s.
Harvest	2s. to 2s.6d. (some-times with drinks)	More in harvest	2s. to 2s.6d. with victuals and drinks.
Winter	1s.4d.		1s. to 1s.4d.

It is difficult to tell how much these wages rose between the two dates, owing to the fact that some are with board, or drink, and some not. The harvest wage appears to have risen in the south from 1s. and board to 2s. or 2s.6d. without board, though sometimes drink was included. For the most part the all year round laborer was getting 1s.6d. throughout the county with the exception of Halifax where he received 1s.8d., Sheffield 1s.9d., and at Rotherham, Pately Bridge, and Shipton rates of 2s. and 2s.6d. are quoted. Apart from Pately Bridge, these figures all apply to the industrial district, it may be noted. About Ripon and Knaresborough wages were at the lower limit; 1s.6d. all year, 1s. to 1s.4d. in winter, and 2s. in summer and harvest. In the northwest,

<sup>1</sup> *Northern Tour*, vol. I. The "South" includes Ecclesfield and Wentworth House (between Rotherham and Barnsley) and Coneysborough (between Doncaster and Rotherham).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 81. Southern group gives range of figures for Leeds, Bradford, Halifax, Rotherham, Sheffield, and district, northern for those north and northwest, Ripon, Knaresborough, Pately Bridge, Crossington, Ingleton, etc.

near Lancashire, they were somewhat higher as victuals were given in both May and harvest, along with the summer rate of 1s. 8d. or 2s. The fact of the rise is well illustrated by the specific instance of Shipton where the rate was 1s. or 1s.2d. in 1783, and 2s. or 2s.6d. ten years later at the date of the survey.

Quite tentatively we may suggest that the southern and industrial districts paid the highest wages as a group, although Skipton and Pateley Bridge turn out as exceptions at once and they were on the edge of the wool district. There is no doubt about the lowness of wages around Ripon<sup>1</sup> and the rate seems somewhat higher in the northwestern district. These conjectures may be kept in mind, at least, preparatory to the analysis of the building trade wages.

The Lancashire agricultural wages listed below are also from Arthur Young.<sup>2</sup> Holt quoted no agricultural wages, but only a few isolated rates for general laborers which have been included in the median of laborers' wages for the county.

1768			
	<i>Halsall</i>	<i>South of Preston</i> <i>Altringham</i>	
Harvest	1s.	1s.3d. or 1s. and beer	
Hay	8d.	1s. and beer	
Winter	10d.	10d.	
	<i>Garstang</i>	<i>Kabers</i>	<i>Burton</i>
Harvest	1s. and board	1s. and board	1s. and board
Hay	10d. and board	1s. and board	1s. and board
Winter	6d. and board	6d. and board	6d. and board

The comparison is here unfavorable to the southern part of Lancashire, but the southern places are so unrepresentative that one cannot generalize. For these wages, such as they are, we have only the 1725 assessment in order to make comparison in the first part of the century. On May 22 of that year the justices of the

<sup>1</sup> There are more samples for this district for one thing—Copgrove, Knaresborough, Ripley, and Ripon are all given as well as Borough Bridge, which is partly in the North Riding. All these show the same low rate.

<sup>2</sup> *Northern Tour*, vol. III. Horsall is near Ormskirk and Altringham is just over the border in Cheshire. Garstang lies between Preston and Lancaster, near the latter, and Burton further north near Westmoreland.

peace, at the Manchester sessions, set the wages in husbandry as follows:

1725<sup>1</sup>

<i>Best husbandry labor</i>	<i>Ordinary husbandry labor</i>
Summer 1s. or 6d. and board	1od. or 5d. and board
Winter 1od. or 5d. and board	9d. or 4d. and board
Haymakers	1od. or 6d. and board
Shearers	1s. or 6d. and board
Mowers of hay	1s. 3d. or 9d. and board
Hedgers	1od. or 6d. and board

From these figures it would appear that Arthur Young found the situation practically unchanged when he passed through Lancashire in 1768. Scarcely any difference is to be noted which is especially interesting as there is some reason to think that assessed wages were often below current rates,<sup>2</sup> such as those quoted by Young.

The justices concluded their assessments with various interpretative clauses among which was the following: "Which wages, rates, and allowances, we the said Justices have hereby ordered not to be exceeded in any part of the said county; but the said county being nearly eighty miles in length, we think the more northern part thereof ought not to demand so much, but be content with what the custom of the county hath usually been . . ."<sup>3</sup> One may infer two things from this statement, that wages in the north had previously been lower and that at the time of the assessment northern rates were beginning to approach the southern level. The justices' advice may perhaps have had some effect at the time, but by 1768 differences between north and south Lancashire in agricultural wages had certainly disappeared.

As far as can be judged from the very scattered material at our disposal, agricultural wages appear to have risen between 1768 and 1793—how much it would be dangerous to say except where the figures are for specific localities. Before 1768, if the Lancashire assessment has any foundation in actual practice, wages in that county were the same as at the later date.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Eden, *State of the Poor*, vol. III, Appendices, pp. cvi-cvii.

<sup>2</sup> See article in *English Historical Review*, July, 1928. See also previous comparisons in chs. III and V.

<sup>3</sup> From Eden, *op. cit.*, III, Appendices, p. cix.



## WAGES IN THE INDUSTRIAL REGIONS

We are not going to examine the purely industrial workmen, but that class of unskilled and skilled trades from which factory workers were recruited. Along with the agricultural laborer, the general laborer on bridges and roads and buildings formed perhaps the most important reservoir of common unskilled workmen that existed. The large number of bridges in Yorkshire and Lancashire, the increased interest in the keeping up of the roads, necessitated an extensive force of workmen, constantly keeping the bridges and highways in repair. It was only natural, too, that these workmen, as communications grew better, and the fame of industrial wage rates greater, should move on to the towns along with their agricultural fellows.

Unfortunately the wage rates which could be procured for the West Riding were few and scattered.<sup>1</sup> They have been listed separately by places, only two of which show any sort of continuity—Ripon and Wakefield. They are charted below (Chart 32).<sup>2</sup> There are also graphed a series for Sutton, procured from the accounts of the Surveyors of the Highways of the town, which are preserved in the library of Chetham's Hospital, Manchester. The figures have not been included with the rest of the West Riding data, for it is not certain that Sutton is in the county. There are at least five Sutton's in the north, and the town may have been in one of several counties. The movement of the figures is reminiscent of the series for work on county buildings in the North Riding, since the rise to 1s.6d. did not take place until the nineties. On the whole, the figures are not inconsistent with the other West Riding wages.

Obviously one cannot tell much from these two series. All of the items were then grouped geographically, those within and

<sup>1</sup> The lack of separate bills is probably due to the early appointment of a county surveyor, to whom was farmed out for a lump sum per annum, the business of repairs. He then presented only lump sum accounts, and not individual bills. It seems peculiar, however, that both the North Riding and Lancashire Sessions Bundles should be full of individual bills for the same type of repairs.

<sup>2</sup> To make these series, the figures for North, Bishopton and Bondgate Bridges (near Ripon) were grouped with Ripon, and Mandland and Brookbank Bridges with Wakefield rates.

without the industrial district being put together. Nearly all places clearly in the industrial area<sup>1</sup> exhibited a rate of 1s. when-  
ever quoted, from 1702 to 1756. Wombwell and Brotherton were  
the exceptions, and the latter had a rate of 1s. as well as 8d. and  
10d. The distinguishing mark of the industrial district seemed to

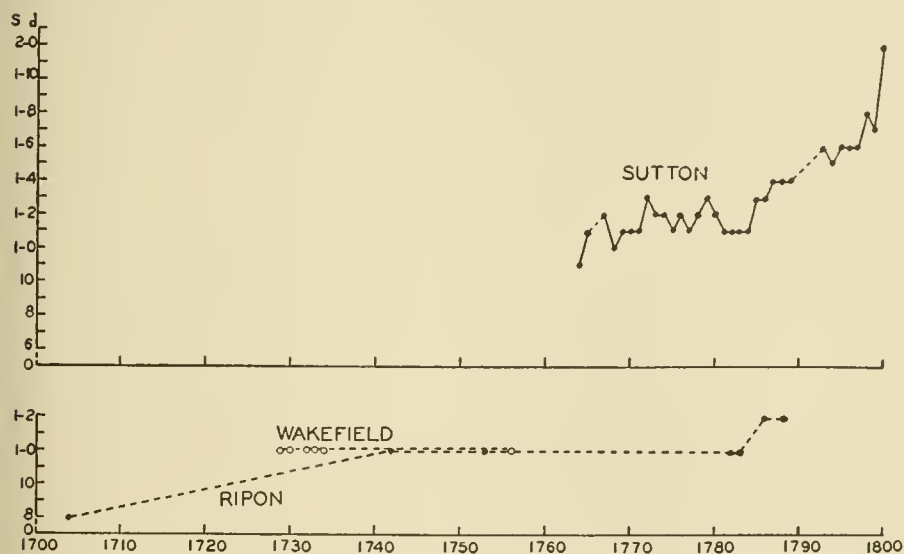


CHART 32—LABORERS' WAGES, WEST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE

lie in the fact of the 1s. rate so early in the century, for the other  
quotations showed generally rates varying from 8d. to 1s. up to  
1730,<sup>2</sup> when the 1s. became customary all over the county. Geo-  
graphically, the second group falls into the district about Knares-  
borough and Ripon, the northwest area, and the arable region  
stretching north from Pontefract. It would probably fall into  
wage groups in turn, if there were more continuous figures. We  
can only say surely that the Ripon and Knaresborough district  
was always at the lowest rate. Near Pontefract and Bautry, the  
rate was 10d. when the former was 8d., and at Linden (near Ro-  
therham) 9d.<sup>3</sup> It is possible that the Pontefract and northwest

<sup>1</sup> They are Rotherham, Wombwell, Harmsworth, Brotherton, Brookbank, Mandland, Wakefield, Huddersfield.

<sup>2</sup> Wetherby is an exception to this, as a 1s. rate was paid in 1705. This is on the edge of the industrial district, however.

<sup>3</sup> This, too, is an exception, as Rotherham paid the 1s. rate.

areas might be found to occupy a middle position between the industrial and Ripon rates.

The chart (33) brings out clearly the difference between the wages paid in the industrial district and the rest of the county before 1730. After 1760 the former figures cease. The only figures

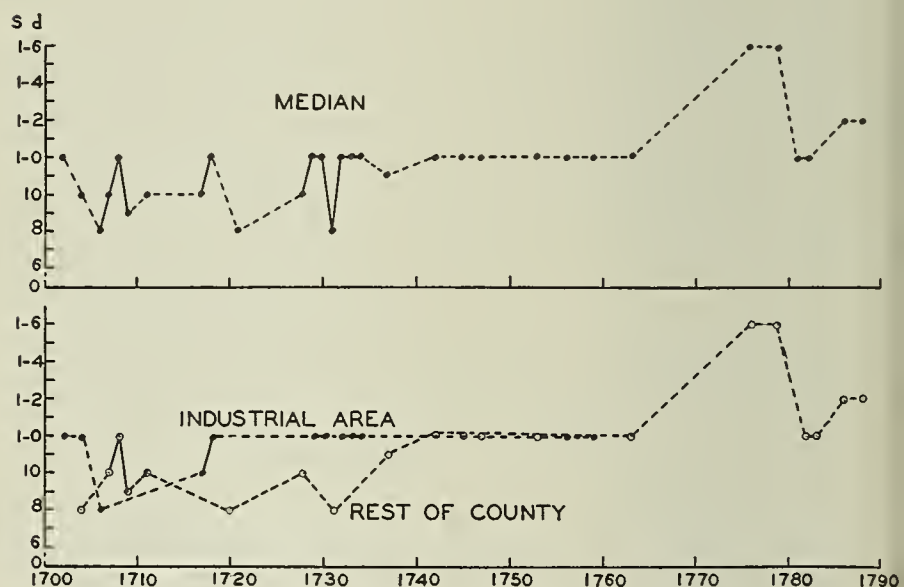


CHART 33—MEDIAN LABORERS' WAGES, WEST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE

we have between the sixties and eighties are for Hebden in 1775, 1s.6d., and for Thorpe Salvin in 1779, also 1s.6d. Now Hebden is in the northwest part of the county near the North Riding, and therefore took part in the rise which we observed there in the previous chapter. We do not know, however, whether the rest of the county shared the upward movement.

As in the case of the North Riding practically the same rate was paid to both masons and carpenters,<sup>1</sup> and the median series, therefore, includes both crafts. (See Chart 34.) And there is much less geographical divergence. The Ripon district was largely responsible for the 1s.4d. rate before 1750 but there was divergence after that. The North Bridge was repaired at 1s.6d. as late as 1782 and 1783, but the Burrage and Bondgate Bridges had paid

<sup>1</sup> Example—1s.6d. for both in Wakefield, 1730, and Ripon, 1753.

1s.8d. and 2s. in the seventies and eighties. Quite generally, therefore, 1s.6d. was the customary rate for journeymen's wages until the sixties all over the county. The master craftsmen in the very few instances available, appeared to have received 2s.<sup>1</sup>

There are a few scattered wages which may be added to the figures received from the sessions records. In 1794 Rennie listed

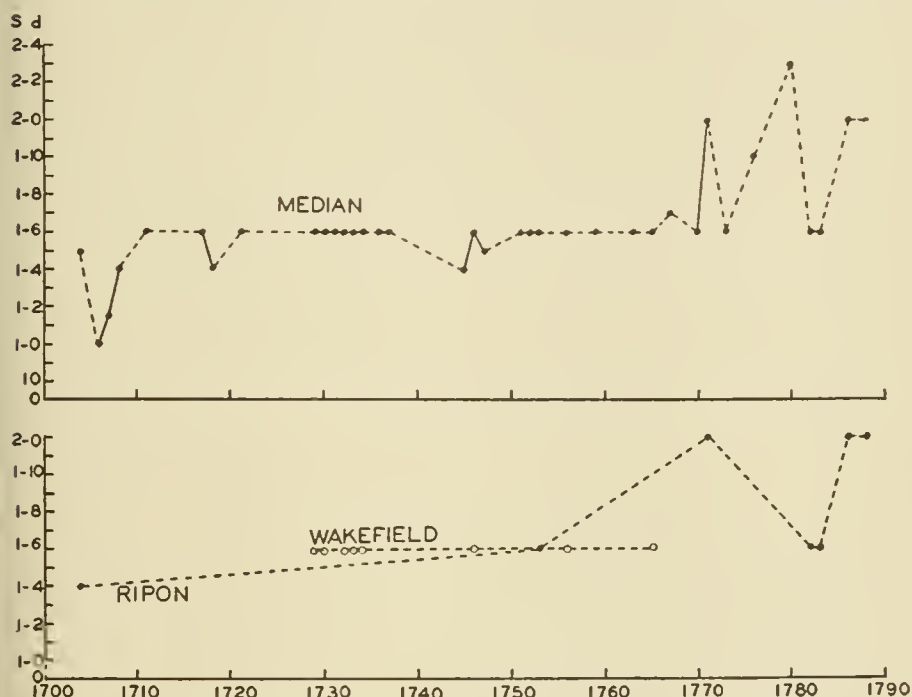


CHART 34—CRAFTSMEN'S WAGES, WEST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE

masons and carpenters at Leeds as receiving from 2s.6d. to 3s. a day, and day laborers as getting from 1s.6d. to 2s.<sup>2</sup> Later still, in 1796, Arthur Young went again to the north and found laborers at Doncaster and Pateley Bridge receiving 1s.6d. per day.<sup>3</sup> By that time, the price rise of the nineties was in full swing and it seems somewhat surprising that rates had not risen even more.

The Lancashire data for building trade wages are much more

<sup>1</sup> For instance, at Thirsey and Blenborough Bridges, 1731; Bondgate, 1742; at Wetherby, however, in 1708, a 1s.8d. wage was paid the master craftsmen.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 114.

<sup>3</sup> See *Annals of Agriculture*, vol. 27, 1796, pp. 290, 299.

complete.<sup>1</sup> The places for which wage rates were given were listed separately according to the method followed previously. No one place, except Lancaster, had sufficient quotations during the century to be charted as a separate series. Ninety-two places,

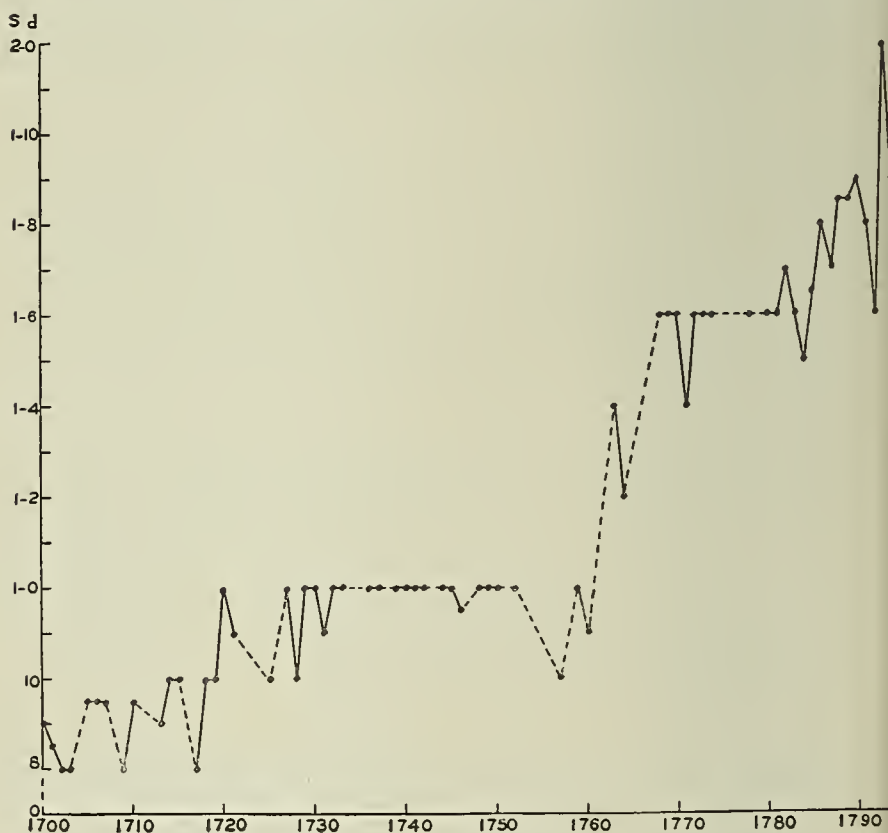


CHART 35—MEDIAN LABORERS' WAGES, LANCASHIRE

however, have rates quoted at one or more times during the century. Observations also made it clear that there was much less variation in rates all over Lancashire than we have noted in Yorkshire and that the median for the whole county was therefore more representative of the general situation. There are two exceptions to this which we shall discuss after the median has been examined. (See Chart 35.)

<sup>1</sup> The rates are taken from bills for repairs, preserved in the *Petitions Bundles*, at the Sessions House, Preston, for the most part. Similar bills for repairs found in Churchwardens, and highway accounts (in both the Manchester Reference Library and the Owen MSS.) as well as from secondary sources have been included.



The median indicates that up to 1720 the general wage rate for laborers varied between 8d. and 10d. In 1720 a rise to 1s. occurred, and for the most part continued steadily until the sixties. There were, however, particularly in the twenties, setbacks to a lower wage of 10d. In the sixties, a steady upward movement was initiated. Wages went up to 1s.4d., 1s.6d., at which level they remained until the beginning of the eighties. Then a further rise began and wages became about 1s.8d. until 1791 after which the rate fluctuated between 1s.9d. and 2s. The wages of laborers in Lancashire, then, were characterized by a steady upward trend. The trend line, however, would not be continuous but broken at intervals by plateaus which bear evidence to the stability of wages over a considerable period of years. The longest of such periods was that between 1720 and 1760, when wages remained almost continuously at the 1s. level.

The fact that the greater part of the rise occurred from 1760 on is well illustrated by the series for Lancaster. (See Chart 36.)

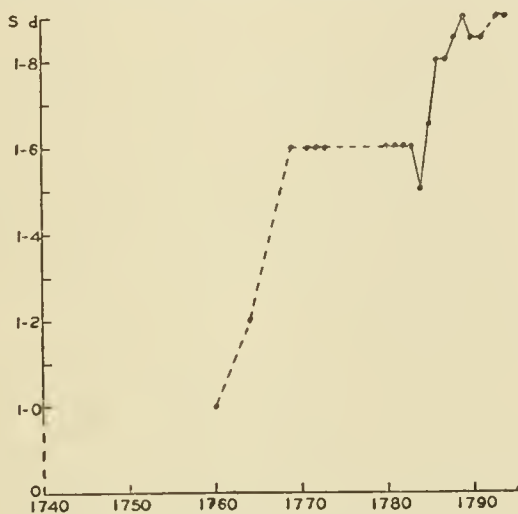


CHART 36—WAGES OF LABOR AT LANCASTER

In 1760 laborers who worked on the repairs of the county buildings in that town were being paid 1s. a day. By 1764 the rate had gone up to 1s.2d., and by 1769 to 1s.6d. There it remained until 1783. In 1784 a reversion to 1s.5d. took place, immediately fol-

lowed by a sharp rise to 1s.8d. The rate hovered between 1s.8d. and 1s.9d. until 1794. In thirty years the wages of laborers rose from 1s. to 1s.9d., which was, for the eighteenth century, a remarkable increase. There is every reason to suppose that Lancaster was typical of the county. All the figures from those in the Lake District such as Coniston, to Manchester and Bolton in the most highly industrialized area, show this rise. Selecting 9d. as the base, median wages for the whole county rose practically 133 per cent from 1700 to 1790. One-third of this rise took place in the first thirty years of the century, and wages then remained the same for the next thirty years. It was in the last thirty years of our period that the greater part of the upward swing occurred, amounting to about 100 per cent of the original wage. It is obvious from the course of wages studied in other districts that such a rise was most unusual for the eighteenth century. We shall try to account for it further on.

These exceptions to the median curve are to be found at the very beginning of the century. Certain places were paying a wage of 1s. as early as 1702—for example, Eccles. Three other places, Ribchester, Calder Bridge, and Manchester had a wage rate of 1s. before 1730, when the laborers in most parts of the county were only getting 8d. or 10d. As might be expected, these places are all in the industrial district, and if the samples were perfectly continuous one would probably find most industrial towns paying the 1s. wages before 1730. By the thirties the 1s. rate for laborers was fairly general.

There are not so many samples of craftsmen's wages, and the selection of those who were master craftsmen is almost impossible from the bills themselves except in one or two clear cut cases.<sup>1</sup> The median curve of masons' and carpenters' wages (see Chart 37) is clearly more erratic than is to be expected of wage variation in the eighteenth century. The way in which it jumps about before the thirties is caused by the various errors of quality and sampling which have been pointed out previously. Inspection of the individual bills leads to the conclusion that a rate of 1s. was ordi-

<sup>1</sup> These master craftsmen have not been included in the median.

narly paid to the journeyman mason or carpenter throughout the county, at least as late as the thirties. The masters generally received 1s.2d. or 1s.4d. in the same period. From the forties

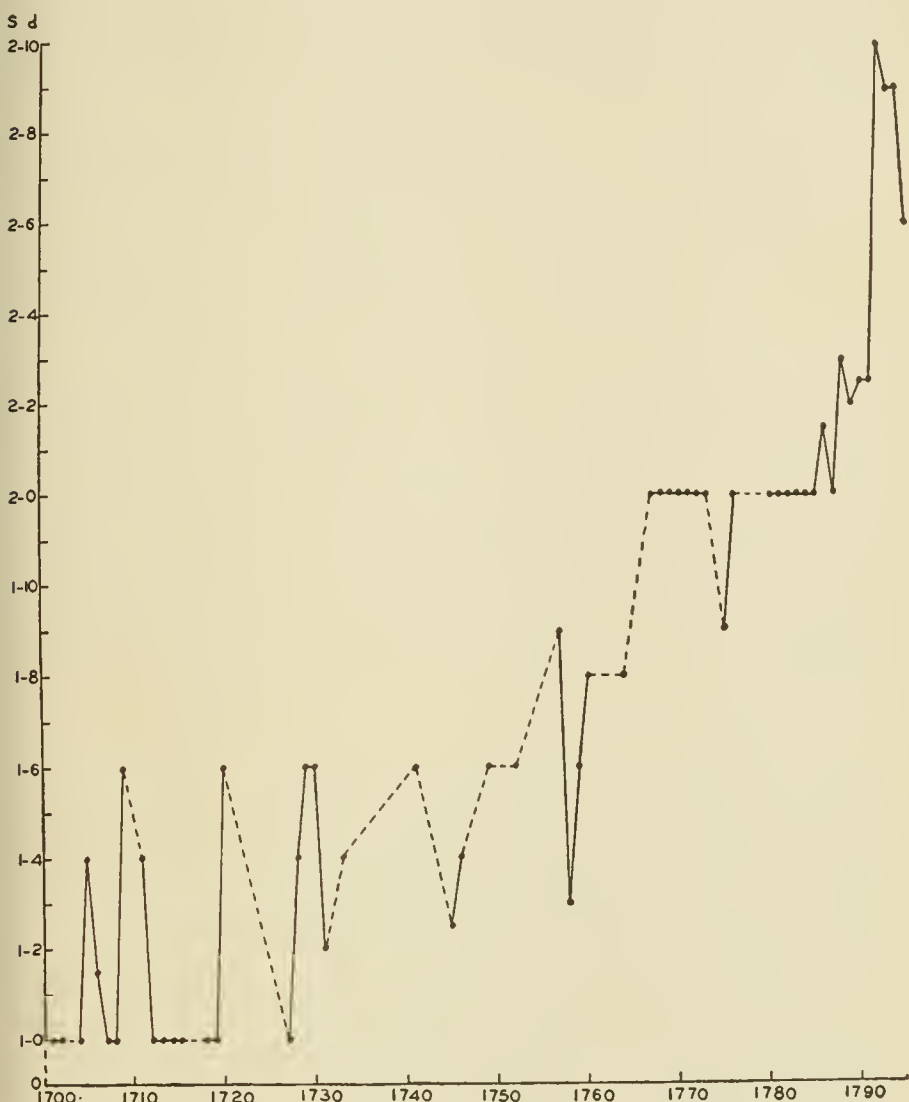


CHART 37—MEDIAN CRAFTSMEN'S WAGES, LANCASHIRE

on, a rate of 1s.6d. seems to have been representative, although 1s.4d. was customary in a few places. In the late fifties an upward movement started (it appears to have been a real time rise) and 1s.8d. became the ordinary rate until the late sixties; then

the rate rose to 2s. remaining there until the late eighties. The master craftsmen received 2s.2d. to 2s.6d. when the journeyman was paid 2s. The trend for the county appears to be—very roughly—1s. up to 1720, 1s.4d. to 1s.6d. up to 1755, 1s.8d. to 1767, 2s. from 1767 to 1785. It may be noted here that carpenters' wages differed scarcely at all from masons' wages.

It is interesting to note that the exceptions which are particularly apparent in the first thirty years of the century apply in many cases to the southern part of the county. The 1s.4d. rates for 1705 are for two bridges in Salford Hundred, the 1707 rate of 1s.6d. is for Staley Bridge of the same district. The highest rate given in 1728, 1s.4d., is for two bridges in Leyland Hundred, and so on. A rate of 1s.8d. was noted in 1703 for Furnessford, in the northern lake district and must surely apply to an especially qualified master craftsman, although the bill gives no indication of the fact. Even for a master, however, it was usually high at that early date, and in that district. A master craftsman working on the Manchester House of Correction was only getting 1s.4d. in the preceding year. There seems to have been a good deal more variation in journeymen's wages in Lancashire, than was found in Yorkshire.

The wage set by the justices at Manchester in 1725 was 1s. (without meat and drink) for the journeymen, and 1s.2d. for the masters, in all the building trades.<sup>1</sup> This was probably not far from the current wage, as far as we can tell, at that time, except possibly in the industrial centers. They added a clause to the document, however, which urged the northern craftsmen to continue accepting a slightly lower rate than was customary in the southern part of the county. From the wage data at our disposal, which include places in all parts of the county, the distinction between north and south may well have been customary as far as journeymen's wages were concerned. We find here, as in the case of laborers' wages that exceptions to the general rate, usually in an upward direction, occurred almost entirely in the south. The

<sup>1</sup> Eden, *op. cit.*, vol. III, Appendices, pp. cvi-cx. Judging from this assessment, the justices' rates were in Lancashire representative of current rates, and not, as in Kent, considerably lower.

distinction, however, is more probably that between rural and industrial areas. Small places in the south, for instance, gave wages of 8d. to 10d. to their laborers, and 1s. to their journeymen, as well as remote spots in the more rural north.<sup>1</sup> Of course, the industrial centres were all in the southern part of the county, but it is to some extent a misrepresentation to make the division purely on geographical grounds. It may also be pointed out that the difference between the wage rates paid in diverse places tended to disappear after the thirties. A shilling rate for laborers and 1s. 4d. to 1s. 6d. for journeymen, appears to have been quite typical of the whole county for the next thirty years.

It is of some interest to compare these wages with those in other trades. Ashton states "That in money wages the coal-miner was better off than most other workers is beyond doubt," and that the collier earned 9s. a week as against 6s. for the laborer in 1771.<sup>2</sup> In the first place, by 1771 the building trade laborer *was* receiving 9s. per week, and the collier was certainly not any better off than a large group of ordinary labor. Nef substantiates this opinion, saying that his evidence does not show the collier to be in a better condition than the ordinary laborer.<sup>3</sup>

### THE EFFECTS OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

The effect of manufactures, as contemporaries put it, or the influence of industrial development, upon northern agriculture, had become noticeable at the end of the century. Many articles in periodicals like the *Annals of Agriculture* were full of analyses of the situation which caused alarm or joy, according to the temperament and economic interest of the author.

Holt believed that the smaller division of property in Lancashire dated from the introduction of manufactures as well as the decline of the yeoman class, to whom the wealth of their neighbors gained from industrial pursuits "offered sufficient temptation to venture their property in trade, in order that

<sup>1</sup> These exact rates were paid in Blackburn Hundred from 1729 to 1731.

<sup>2</sup> Ashton and Sykes, *op. cit.*, pp. 147-8.

<sup>3</sup> Nef, J. U., *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 195-6.



they might keep pace with these fortunate adventurers.”<sup>1</sup> Rennie and his co-workers went into the subject in some detail and came to the following conclusion for the West Riding:

“It appears to us, that manufactures have had a sensible effect in promoting agriculture in this district. By them a ready market is afforded for every particle of provisions that can be raised, without which agriculture must always be feeble and languid. They have, no doubt, raised the rate of wages considerably: this always follows of course, where trade prospers, and is a sure sign of wealth; but they have at the same time raised the value of the produce of land, which much more than enables the farmer to pay the increased rate of wages.”<sup>2</sup>

It was the rise of wages which was the focus of most of the contemporary comments. We have found in the previous analysis of money wages, based on the material in the sessions records, that this upward movement began in the sixties in Lancashire and the North Riding of Yorkshire. Caird noted nearly a century later that “the higher wages of the northern county is altogether due to the proximity of manufacturing and mining enterprise . . .”<sup>3</sup> One contemporary writer, T. H. Campbell, Esq., of Blackpool, Lancashire, was very dubious as to whether agriculture could stand the competition of industry. The profits in the trades, he said, “outbid it, upon every article necessary for its thriving, or even keeping its ground.”<sup>4</sup> And the principal bad influence of manufactures upon agriculture he found in the high wages which the competition forced the landowners to pay to agricultural labor. Unlike Rennie, he believed agriculture unable to pay them.

It was agreed that the average level of wages in the north was comparatively high, at the end of the century. More than that, several people pointed out that wages were highest in the vicinity of the industrial centres, diminishing in height with the distance

<sup>1</sup> Holt, J., *op. cit.*, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Rennie, C., etc., *op. cit.*, p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Caird, James, *English Agriculture in 1850-1851*, London, 1853.

<sup>4</sup> An article entitled “Answers to Queries Relating to the Agriculture of Lancashire,” written in 1793 and published in Vol. XX of the *Annals of Agriculture*. See pp. 136-140 for general discussion of manufactures vs. agriculture. Campbell deplored the state of agriculture.

from the towns.<sup>1</sup> Holt quoted from a correspondent to the effect "that the rate of wages is in proportion to the distance of townships from the seats of manufacturers" and gave the rates of laborers at Chorley, Euxton, Eccleston, and so on to prove the point.<sup>2</sup> Further proof is found in the wages of the county bills which we have just examined. Laborers were paid 1s. at Manchester from 1721, but only 8d. at West Houghton, a few miles away, in 1718. And the rate at Bawtrey, on the Lincolnshire border, was 10d. in 1711, but 1s. at Harmsworth (near Sheffield) in 1718. The Wakefield rate was also 1s. in 1719, while the year before 10d. was paid to laborers at Harbury (near Pontefract). The stability of the wage rate over a considerable period of years makes these comparisons quite justified, even when there are a few years between the rates compared.<sup>3</sup> It is more than probable, that if the figures were complete for Manchester, Leeds, or similar industrial centres, and their surrounding districts, that a similar situation to the one around London, Oxford, Exeter, or Bristol would be discovered.<sup>4</sup>

Howlett analyzed in some detail the influence of industry not only upon wages, but upon the whole earnings of the agricultural laborer and his family. He illustrated his conclusion that "While manufactures are flourishing and increasing, the price of agricultural labor in the immediate vicinity will flourish and increase, too; but the decline of the former will soon be followed by the decline also of the latter," by the cases of Manchester, and various towns in East Anglia where industry was declining. There was fully a shilling's difference between the agricultural wage at Manchester (2s.2d.) and, for instance, at Braintree (1s.2d.). He dealt, too, with the increased opportunities afforded for work to the women and children of the family in a growing

<sup>1</sup> Redford makes a point of this in *Labour Migration in England, 1800-1880*, Manchester, 1926. See especially pp. 59, 60.

<sup>2</sup> Holt, *op. cit.*, p. 53. Chorley — 3s. with ale

Euxton — 2s. or 2s.6d.

Eccleston — 1s.6d. or 2s.

Mawdsley and Bispham — 1s.2d. and 1s.4d. (at harvest)

<sup>3</sup> Wages in any one place often remained unchanged for twenty or thirty years, especially at the beginning of the century.

<sup>4</sup> See Chapters II and III.

industrial district. He concluded, therefore, that the family earnings of the husbandman would be very much greater when industry was progressing.<sup>1</sup>

Even with the advance in agricultural wages, which Campbell so greatly deplored, manufacturing wages were still higher, so that the drift to the towns was distinctly noticeable.<sup>2</sup> There was some divergence of opinion as to whether this migration was sufficient to make it difficult for the farmers to get labor. Holt found that in Lancashire the "preference given to the manufacturing employment, by labourers in general" had "embarrassed the farmers, by the scarcity of workmen, and of course advanced the price of labour."<sup>3</sup> On the other hand Rennie found that there were usually enough laborers in the West Riding to enable the farmers to carry out their work successfully, and that at harvest time the manufacturers (mostly weavers) left their looms and joined in the work. Only in 1792 had a real scarcity of labor been felt by the farmers.<sup>4</sup> The difference in the opinions of these two authorities is quite easily explained by the differences in industrial development in Lancashire and the West Riding. By 1792, Lancashire was much more highly industrialized in a technical way, than the West Riding.

It seems quite obvious that the sharp rise of wages in the north, which has been noted, was due to the influence of expanding industry. Yet Arthur Young called it "a circumstance totally without effect" in trying to explain why agricultural wages in the

<sup>1</sup> From an article on the "Different Quantity and Expence of Agricultural Labour, in Different Years," in the *Annals of Agriculture*, 1792, vol. XVIII, p. 571. The article deals with various other influences on agriculture such as leases, seasons, good or bad harvests, kind of produce, and so on, as well as manufactures.

<sup>2</sup> See Redford, *op. cit.*, for a detailed analysis of this labor migration in the north. He concludes that it was "a short distance, centripetal movement, and the motive force was the positive attraction of industry rather than the negative repulsion of agriculture." P. 60. Wadsworth, however, from the scanty evidence available as to wages in the cotton industry, finds that weavers' wages were frequently not above those of the common laborer, except in the case of the check weavers. See *op. cit.*, pp. 401-405. Contemporary opinion, however, was strong for the view that manufacturing wages were higher, and although they may have overemphasized the difference, it cannot have been entirely a delusion.

<sup>3</sup> Holt, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

<sup>4</sup> Rennie, etc., *op. cit.*, p. 11.

district 100 to 200 miles from London approximated the London level. He had hoped to find for the whole of England, as well as for the immediate vicinity of London, that wages decreased with the increasing distance from the metropolis.<sup>1</sup> The counties of Lancashire and Yorkshire were included in this area 100 to 200 miles from London, and amply explain, in the mind of the present writer, the fact that wages there were almost as high as in London. And it seems equally clear that the reason why Young was unable to "conjecture" the cause of this exception to his theory lies in the fact that he had discarded the true explanation, namely, the presence of thriving industrial centres<sup>2</sup> which formed metropolitan areas similar to London.

Some exception must be taken, however, to Redford's statement that "agricultural labourers were most highly paid round the textile districts of Lancashire and the West Riding,"<sup>3</sup> if by that he means to exclude entirely districts further afield. As far as the general laborer, who worked on the county bridges and roads, was concerned, his wage was as high in the North Riding, and the more purely agricultural districts of Lancashire as in the immediate neighborhood of the manufacturing towns. It became even more true as the century went on and applied particularly to the period after 1750. Whether this may be explained by the diffusion of the industrial demand for labor over areas somewhat larger than Redford appears to have in mind, or by other reasons, we can only surmise. It is plausible to suppose, especially in Lancashire, that as industry became organized and factories increased, the demand for labor reached out even to the most rural districts with a consequent effect on the rate of wages. This

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter II where his table from the *Southern Tour* is given. In vol. IV of the *Northern Tour* in 1771, pp. 445-46 he gives a similar table for England:

<i>Distance from London</i>	<i>Wage</i>
To 50 miles	7s. 1d.
50 to 100	6s. 9d.
100 to 200	7s. 2d.
200 to 300	7s.
300 to 400	5s. 8d.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 446. Young said in commenting on the table: "... from one hundred to three hundred the price is equal to the *London* ones, and the occasion is what I can by no means conjecture . . ."

<sup>3</sup> Redford, Arthur, *op. cit.*, p. 59.



explanation is not as convincing in the case of the North Riding, however. In the first place, the West Riding woollen industry did not develop as fast as the cotton industry in Lancashire and the need for laborers in factories would not therefore be as great. More than that, the West Riding had a much larger area to draw upon in itself than Lancashire, and it would not appear necessary to induce labor from the North Riding at that period. Those with local knowledge<sup>1</sup> suggest that labor had always been relatively scarce in the North Riding, due to the prevalence of border raids, and that the improvement of agriculture by the great landowners during the eighteenth century tended to raise wages in itself. The agricultural advance was especially important. Along with these facts, the opportunity for small farming on the waste, which, although not profitable, made it possible for the laborer to find his existence, increased the independence of the laborer, and made him less likely to enter into industry without the inducement of high wages. It was, in a sense, a frontier situation, such as was found in the United States in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>2</sup> However that may be, a comparison shows that wages in the North Riding and Lancashire moved almost exactly in the same way throughout the century.

<sup>1</sup> For example, Mr. Thornley, Clerk of the Peace for the North Riding, and Sir Alfred Pease of Middlesborough who has been referred to before.

<sup>2</sup> This is a suggestion of Professor Gay.



## CHAPTER VII

### REAL WAGES IN THE NORTH

FROM a statistical standpoint, the measurement of real wages in the north must be less precise than in any district yet analysed in this study. This is largely due to the fact that it is impossible to secure completely continuous prices of oats, which was the main food of the laboring class<sup>1</sup> in the eighteenth century, for either Lancashire or Yorkshire.<sup>2</sup> The peculiar interest of the north and its significant part in that whole course of events making up the "Industrial Revolution" is so great, however, that it seems to the writer even more essential that some approximation be attempted. Helpful as the available descriptive material may be, it does not give any quantitative basis for judging the possible changes in standards of living. Here even the roughest proportion between wages and prices is invaluable as a basis for discussion, if, indeed, it represents the actual course of events.

The north, comprising Lancashire, the North and West Ridings of Yorkshire, is to be dealt with as a whole. Anyone who has read carefully the two preceding chapters will see at once that a similar situation prevailed over the whole area. The medians for laborers' wages in Lancashire and the North Riding are practically identical, and there is nothing in the scattered West Riding figures (except perhaps the low wage prevailing at Ripon) to contradict these two series. Almost the same is true of the curves for the craftsmen (masons and carpenters). Throughout the northern area we have found, as shown by the trends in the various charts,

<sup>1</sup> This will be discussed at length further on.

<sup>2</sup> Sir William Beveridge's figures contain no oat prices. The Bureau of Agriculture had no early prices of oats, and search in various contemporary and later sources produced only discontinuous data for short periods of time. The best that could be done was to piece together discontinuous oat prices for Manchester, 1738 to 1772, with those for Lancashire, 1772 to 1790. The Manchester prices were secured through the kindness of Mr. A. P. Wadsworth who took them from the *Manchester Mercury* and other periodicals. The county prices are from the *Gentleman's Magazine*.

that the prevailing course of wages may be represented by a slow rise, broken by discontinuous levels when rates were stable over some years, up to about 1762 or 1763. Then occurred a steep rise to the early seventies, a pause at the new level until the late eighties, and a further upward movement gathering speed in the nineties. This trend seemed best represented by the Lancashire median series for craftsmen's and laborers' wages. The Lancashire medians, based on material from all over the county, are more continuous and typical than the North Riding series. It may be recalled that the latter's curve for laborers' wages was dominated in the first few years by the low rate area.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, the wage series which appear in the accompanying chart (38) are the Lancashire median series, used to typify the course of wages in the north.

It is held that these curves represent the northern area. This does not mean that there are no exceptions. On the contrary, the process of locating wage areas which took up so much time in the preceding pages, produced districts which showed distinct variation from the typical curves; for example, the western moorlands in the North and West Ridings were undoubtedly from 1d. to 2d. lower until the seventies; the Ripon area had only risen to 1s.2d. by the eighties; and the industrial districts of both Lancashire and the West Riding were probably at 1s. as early as the beginning of the century. And the same is true of the journeymen's wages. The Yorkshire wage seems to have gone up to 1s.6d. somewhat sooner than in Lancashire. The fact remains, however, that even these diverse wage areas have the same trend, more or less sharply upward throughout the century, and that the curve selected as typical may be considered a trend line in the sense that it is representing *homogeneous* tendencies.

So much for the wages. The price curves which are charted are for wheat and oats, and record the price per half peck for wheat during the century in Yorkshire;<sup>2</sup> per one and one-half

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter V.

<sup>2</sup> The prices are the York assize prices of wheat, lent by Sir William Beveridge. The assize figures were reduced from quarters. The half peck (see chapter I) is the estimated daily consumption of a family of six persons.

pecks for oats in Lancashire.<sup>1</sup> It appears that the daily amount of oats consumed in the sample periods during which it can be compared with the family wheat allowance cost as much if not more than the wheat, so that the wheat series really represents the price of the family oats, as well as wheat.

This point is of such importance as to be worth examining in detail. In the first place, oat prices are available for Yorkshire and Lancashire from 1772 on in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Thorold Rogers also gives oat prices for Castle Howard and Brandsby, in the periods 1715 to 1728; 1742 to 1752; 1760 to 1780.<sup>2</sup> These two places are in Yorkshire and comparison with the Yorkshire county prices showed some divergencies, but approximately the same movement. On the basis of Charles Smith's estimate of the amount of oats consumed annually per person, a family of six was estimated to consume one and one-half pecks of oats per day.<sup>3</sup> The oat prices were then reduced to the price per one and one-half pecks, and for the identical years, charted with the price of the wheat allowance of one-half a peck. Only the results for Lancashire are drawn in the chart, as they are sufficient indication of the situation. Clearly, a family could have bought wheat almost as cheaply as oats, and from 1772 to 1790, wheat would have been positively cheaper in both Lancashire and Yorkshire. The latter figures are county averages and may therefore be considered sound, although the oat prices at Brandsby and Castle Howard are perhaps somewhat dubious. However, the evidence is so consistent that the wheat allowance has been considered sufficiently representative of the cost of oats for a northern family.

One other thing must be noted about the prices. We have used Yorkshire wheat prices and Lancashire oat prices. Now the

<sup>1</sup> The Manchester and Lancashire oats prices were reduced to the price per one and one-half pecks, which represents the daily consumption of a family of six persons.

<sup>2</sup> See *History of Agriculture and Prices*, vol. VII, under these places in the above years.

<sup>3</sup> See *Three Tracts on the Corn Trade*, 1766, No. 3, p. 221. He estimates two quarters seven bushels of oats per person annually. This amounts to seventeen quarters two bushels annually for six people, or 552 pecks. Divide by 365, and the result is 1.51 pecks per family each day.

evidence from 1772 on indicates that the Lancashire wheat and oat prices were consistently somewhat higher than those of Yorkshire. Part, though not all, of the discrepancy between the price of the oat and wheat allowance may therefore be due to regional variation. It should be remembered in the forthcoming discussion that the Lancashire prices were somewhat higher.<sup>1</sup>

We are now in a position to study Chart 38 as a picture of the



CHART 38—WAGES AND PRICES IN THE NORTH

standard of living of the northern laborer and craftsman. We may leave out of the question, for the present, the fact that the cost of oats per family was not the only item in the budget.

The situation revealed by the chart is one of increasing wages and fairly stable prices. The trend of prices was very slightly

<sup>1</sup> There were other regional price areas throughout the district we are studying but it is impossible to account for them all statistically. Some idea of the local divergences may be gained from studying the discontinuous prices quoted by Arthur Young in the *Northern Tour* and by Tuke (*op. cit.*, p. 82) and Rennie (*op. cit.* Appendix). The variations are not as great as one might expect and it seems reasonable to assume that, with growth of communication, price differences would tend to disappear. Holt estimated that in Lancashire everything but wheat was a little below the London price, but that wheat was about 1s. per bushel more at the Liverpool market (see *op. cit.*, p. 62).



downward from 1710 to 1755, and slightly upward from then on, but on the whole the tendency is level. Wages, however, show a very decided upward movement, especially marked after 1760. If we are to judge from the chart, real wages in the north increased steadily during the century, with a greatly accelerated rate in the last thirty years of our period.

Some idea of the extent of the increase may be gained from the fact that for the first thirty years of the century somewhat more than one-half of the laborer's daily wage would have had to be spent on bread. From 1730 to 1755 the proportion had gone down to one-half. But in the period 1770 to 1790, despite a slight rise in the cost of the oats allowance, the proportion between it and wages went down nearly to one-third.<sup>1</sup> Single years of bad harvests, such as 1709, 1722, 1740, 1756 and so on, are exceptions, of course, and must have necessitated the expenditure of practically all the wage on bread alone.

One must not forget, however, that we have so far been referring only to the daily wage rate. Any rise in real wages exhibited by the daily figures, would of course be severely limited if the laborer were unemployed for any length of time during the year. We cannot attempt any measure of annual wages, but it is quite certain from all the evidence at hand that unemployment was not the order of the day in the north. The bills themselves show that between a week and a month was the usual period for a man to work at the repairs of any one place,<sup>2</sup> and repairs were going

<sup>1</sup> Annual average price of wheat (per  $\frac{1}{2}$  peck — based on figures given):

1700-09 6d.	1730-39 6d.	1760-69 $6\frac{1}{2}$ d.
1710-19 7d.	1740-49 6d.	1770-79 7d.
1720-29 7d.	1750-59 7d.	1780-89 9d.

<sup>2</sup> For example: (from *North Riding Sessions Rolls*)

- 1734 — Repair of Norton Bridge; men worked 4 to 28 days each
- 1739 — Repair of Whitby Bridge; 8 men worked 6 to 50 days each
- 1748 — Repair of Northallerton Bridge; men worked 4 to 43 days each  
(laborer worked 43 days)
- 1772 — Repair of Catterick Bridge; laborers 2 to 20 days each
- 1773 — Repair of Greta Bridge; men 3 to 80 days each
- 1775 — Repair of Coverham Bridge; laborers  $6\frac{1}{2}$  to 10 days each
- 1775 — Repair of Cover Bridge; laborers 6 to  $22\frac{1}{2}$  days each

There seems to have been no decrease in number of days work throughout the century.



on all the time. The large number of bridges in the north, the increasing necessity for communication which came with industrial expansion were all forces making the demand for labor very great.<sup>1</sup> There was also the fact of industrial competition and the migration of rural laborers towards the industrial centres, a circumstance which would undoubtedly mean higher wages and more constant employment for those who could be induced to remain in the rural districts.

There is, as well, the question of earnings. It was particularly true of the north that the family earnings were much greater than the wage of the father of the family. Women were customarily employed on the roads,<sup>2</sup> in agriculture,<sup>3</sup> and many of them found constant occupation in spinning flax or wool, or knitting in their homes. They received anywhere from 6d. to 10d. a day, a considerable addition to the family income. Then there was the work of the children. They did odd jobs as soon as they were strong enough to pick up small stones, help in harvest work and similar light tasks. They were paid about 4d. or 6d. a day as a rule.<sup>4</sup> Let us suppose that about 1740 the man was earning the usual wage of 1s., the woman 6d., and three children out of four, 4d. apiece, then the total daily wage would be 2s.6d., more than double the amount of the man's earnings alone.

And this is apart from perquisites. Drink to the value of 1d. or 2d. a day was regularly given to laborers on roads and bridges.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Aikin, *A Description of the Country . . . around Manchester*, 1795, p. 184, described the change in the distribution of Manchester goods by pack-horses loaded with stuff to the use of chapmen who rode out for orders and only carried patterns. "It was during the forty years from 1730 to 1770," he says, "that trade was greatly pushed by the practice of sending these riders all over the kingdom . . ." Better roads were needed for riding horses than for pack-horses, it may be added.

<sup>2</sup> The bills often mention rates for women's work.

<sup>3</sup> See Chapter IV, the discussion of women's employment on the Thornborough estate.

<sup>4</sup> See evidence from Thornborough accounts.

<sup>5</sup> For instance — an order of court at the Rotherham Sessions in July, 1726, allowed "Joseph Webster late overseer of the highways of the Township aforesaid/ Ecclesfield/ the sume of Tenshillings for so much by him expended and paid at four Several Times for ale for the labourers who wrought at the repairs of the said highways, . . ." (*West Riding Order Books*, July, 1726). Ale was almost always included in the items on the bills for similar work sent in by Constables, surveyors, etc.

Agricultural laborers and servants were given drink, too, generally twice a day, a custom which Rennie branded as "ridiculous," and was strongly in favor of its total abolition.<sup>1</sup> The Thornborough accounts illustrated how the agricultural laborer was allowed to purchase meat and other things from his employer, ordinarily at lower than market price. To a certain extent, this resulted in paying wages in kind and Marshall quite legitimately criticized it as in many cases restricting the independence of the laborers.<sup>2</sup> Common rights undoubtedly prevailed in the north, especially in Yorkshire, throughout the eighteenth century. The large amount of waste and moorland had always encouraged squatters, and the laborer was generally able to keep some sort of cow or sheep and graze it on the moors. Opinions differed, of course, as to the real benefits arising from this practice. Many felt with Campbell that the right of commons "in respect to the poor, deceives them into a more wretched state, than they would be without it; and tempts them, generally with success, into idle, disorderly, dishonest, and thieving habits."<sup>3</sup> Holt was rather of this opinion, too. Nevertheless, agitation for the provision of a small garden, so as to enable laborers to keep a cow or two rose to surprising heights in the nineties, as a result of the increase of the enclosure of waste lands, which, in the south and midlands had deprived the laborer of these common rights. Many urged that laborers be given a small piece of land in lieu of their common rights. One man painted a lyrical picture of the results attained, in spurring a Tadcaster laborer to industry and independence by such a procedure.<sup>4</sup> Another attributed the low poor rates in the north to the fact that most cottagers had plots of land and could keep a cow, and advised relieving the poor by

<sup>1</sup> Rennie, etc., *op. cit.*, p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> See his discussion of Rennie's remarks (*A Review of Reports . . . of the Northern Department*, York, 1808, p. 377). Rennie advocated the payment of wages in kind as insuring the laborer's comfortable existence and so preventing his "whim of the moment" in spending money.

<sup>3</sup> See Campbell's article in *Annals of Agriculture*, vol. XX, p. 144. Many articles on common rights appeared about this date in the *Annals*.

<sup>4</sup> *An Account of a Cottage and Garden near Tadcaster*, by F. Bernard, Esq., in the *Annals of Agriculture*, vol. XXX, pp. 1-10.

giving them allotments of ground.<sup>1</sup> The fact that enclosure was to so large an extent non-parliamentary in the north meant that in most cases the laborer was given some land of value in return for his common rights. Marshall stated, in answer to Rennie's advocacy of cottages for farm servants in the West Riding, that it had long been the practice for farm laborers to have gardens, and even orchards, along with their cottages.<sup>2</sup> He was sceptical of the value to the laborer of keeping cows and poultry, however, and scornfully derided, with large capital letters, the "'declamations' about LABORERS KEEPING COWS".<sup>3</sup> Whatever the opinion as to the results, the practice of keeping a cow, whether by right of common, or allotment of land, was clearly the usual thing for the northern laborer.

The term "laborer" has been used in the preceding discussion to include both the agricultural and the general laborer on roads and buildings. To a large extent, especially in the rural areas, the two occupations were intermixed.<sup>4</sup> In respect of perquisites, at least as regards drink and common rights, their situation was much the same. The general laborer frequently received a higher money wage, the agricultural laborer more perquisites and benevolent paternalism from his landlord. With both of them, however, perquisites were an important addition to their income.

All these considerations, length of employment, wages of wife and children, perquisites, and so on, must be remembered in judging the amount of real wages, as distinct from money wages. In the north the balance of these matters clearly leads to a liberal interpretation of the money wages on the chart. They are, distinctly, an understatement of the laborer's earnings.

### THE FAMILY BUDGET

The assumption that the bread of the lower classes in the north

<sup>1</sup> A letter by C. Lanson of Hevesham, Westmoreland, on *Hints favourable to the Poor*, in the *Annals of Agriculture*, vol. 40, pp. 51-70.

<sup>2</sup> *Review of Reports . . . of the Northern Department*, York, 1808, p. 371.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 408, 409.

<sup>4</sup> A Lancashire county official tells me that to the present day laborers on roads, etc., work on the farms in harvest time, and that their daily wage is calculated with this supplementary income in mind.

was oat bread is borne out by contemporary evidence. Charles Smith included Lancashire in his fourth district, where oats had the highest percentage (39 per cent) of the grains consumed, with wheat coming second at 26 per cent. Yorkshire fell into the fifth district, where wheat, oats, and rye (there is a slight numerical advantage in favor of oats) were consumed equally by 32 per cent of the inhabitants.<sup>1</sup>

Eden constantly emphasized the oat and barley bread eaten throughout the north, and gave various examples of the kind of oat bread made.<sup>2</sup> In 1768 Young found a great deal of oat bread eaten at Leeds;<sup>3</sup> and that wheat and oats were mixed together at Swaith (Yorkshire).<sup>4</sup>

Towards the end of the century, however, the laboring classes began to eat wheat bread more regularly. First it was consumed only on special occasions, and then gradually became a more regular part of the lower class diet. In 1788, Marshall found that all the wheat raised — not a great deal to be sure — was entirely used for home-consumption.<sup>5</sup> The replies to Young's queries concerning the substitutes for bread during the great scarcity of 1795 elicited the fact that in several places in the north (Liverpool, Tadcaster), no substitute for wheat bread had been used, and in others (Bickerstaffe, Scarisbrick, Prescott, Halsall in Lancashire) that potatoes, oat, rye, or barley bread were used along with wheat.<sup>6</sup> Undoubtedly the use of wheat bread crept in during the century. The situation was well summarized by Holt, as follows:

"The GRAIN principally cultivated is oats, which, when ground to meal, is the food of the labouring class, particularly in the Northern and Eastern borders of the county, made up into bread cakes, of which there are varieties prepared by fermentation with sour leaven—others without leaven and rolled very thin; also water, boiled and thickened with meal into porridge; and this, eaten with suet, or butter milk, small-beer sweetened with treacle,

<sup>1</sup> *Tracts on the Corn Trade*, 1804 (new edition), p. 207.

<sup>2</sup> *State of the Poor*. See vol. I, pp. 510, 526, 564, and vol. II, p. 512.

<sup>3</sup> *Northern Tour*, vol. I, p. 153.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 396.

<sup>5</sup> *The Rural Economy of Yorkshire*, 1788, vol. I, p. 293.

<sup>6</sup> See *Annals of Agriculture*, vol. XXIV, 1795.



or treacle only, was in many families, about forty years ago, both the breakfast and supper meal. The general use of tea, especially amongst the females, has lessened the use of meal at breakfast; and the influx of wealth has induced numbers to indulge, upon many occasions, with the wheaten loaf. Notwithstanding the consumption of oat-meal, is not so general at present as it was formerly; yet the quantity, still used, is very considerable; and the growth of oats, is greater in proportion, than that of any other grain."<sup>1</sup>

The diet in the north was based on oats in various forms of cakes and puddings, and was very simple as a whole. Eden described the puddings, eaten with milk, beer, butter, or treacle, and the soups of the north, and deplored the fact that laborers in the south could not be induced to eat these things.<sup>2</sup> He considered them both cheaper and more nourishing than the southerner's diet of wheat bread, cheese, tea, and beer. A Westmoreland man claimed the same virtue for the oatmeal dishes and milk eaten almost entirely in his village of Haversham.<sup>3</sup> Yet, Adam Smith could remark on the comparative lack of strength and good looks among Scotch laborers compared with the English of that class, and attributed the difference to the oat diet of the former and the wheat bread eaten by the latter.<sup>4</sup>

The Yorkshire and Lancashire diet did, of course, include a good many potatoes, which Smith thought were strengthening. The diet of the poor at Ingleton, Yorkshire, was largely potatoes and oatmeal, with a little meat, milk or tea.<sup>5</sup> A poor house in Leeds provided, besides the usual puddings and bread, boiled beef or mutton twice a week, cold meat and potatoes twice a week, and beer, milk, or treacle.<sup>6</sup> A boy of 13, in Newchurch, Lancashire, described the simple standard of living of his family to Bishop Pococke who recounted that "oat-cake and buttermilk was their common food, that on a festival they had a piece of meat and a

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 24, 25. Much of this was repeated — without reference to Holt, however,— by Aikin, in 1795, in his *A Description of the Country from thirty to forty miles around Manchester*, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 496 ff.

<sup>3</sup> See Lanson's letter in the *Annals of Agriculture*, vol. 40, pp. 57, 58.

<sup>4</sup> *Wealth of Nations*, 1776 (Everyman edition), vol. I, p. 146.

<sup>5</sup> *Annals of Agriculture*, vol. 26, p. 226.

<sup>6</sup> *Annals of Agriculture*, vol. 28, pp. 249-251. An article by Eden on the state of the Poor in Headingley, a part of the borough of Leeds.



pye-pudding; that his father paid six pounds a year, kept a horse, three cows, and forty sheep; that his father and he wove woollen both for their clothing and to sell . . .'<sup>1</sup> This was obviously one of the agricultural weaver's families, about whom we have heard so much in the north, and as such typical of a higher plane of life than the common laborers. Yet the difference was not so very great — the laborer was a small holder, too (though he probably had only one cow and a much less expensive cottage), and partook of about the same diet.

In commenting upon the extraordinary height of servants' wages (£15 to £18 per annum) in Yorkshire, Marshall remarked that it was somewhat compensated for by the simplicity of their diet. This included, he said, milk; animal food at least once, and sometimes three times a day; and malt liquor.<sup>2</sup> The southern laborer, with his meat once or twice a week at the most, would perhaps have considered this diet less simple, despite the customary oatbread.

We have seen that wheat bread was probably very little, if at all, more expensive than oats for a family to consume, so that the use of oats so largely in the north must have been founded on custom, and the taste acquired by habitual usage. Perhaps more puddings could be made from oatmeal; it may have been more filling than wheat; and therefore less expensive in the long run. Nevertheless, there is reason to think that taste, or habit, had a good deal to do with it. At Ingleton, Yorkshire, it was mentioned that although the poorer women bought wheat bread "to their tea" when they could afford it, the "opulent" families ate oaten bread.<sup>3</sup> It was surely a matter of taste alone with them. To some extent this preference for oat bread must have existed with the northern laborers. Perhaps it was a hang-over from the days when oats really were cheaper,<sup>4</sup> and the habit cultivated by necessity grew into a preferred taste. At any rate, oatmeal is

<sup>1</sup> *Travels in England* (Camden Society Publications), vol. I, 1888, pp. 203, 204.

<sup>2</sup> *The Rural Economy of Yorkshire*, vol. I, p. 259.

<sup>3</sup> See *Annals of Agriculture*, vol. XXVI, 1796, p. 226.

<sup>4</sup> In this connection see Malthus' comment (*Principles of Political Economy*, pp. 229, 230) to the effect that the use of wheat bread was initiated by its comparative cheapness from 1710 to 1760, a cheapness which oats did not share.

still used in the north, although wheat bread has long been in the ordinary diet of all classes in the country.

As to the other items of diet, meat seems to have been more frequently served at the table of the northern laborer than at that of the southerner. Eden was highly in favor of the method of preparing meat in the north, that of boiling it, so that soup might be made out of the bones and stock, as against the more wasteful practice of roasting which was prevalent in the south.<sup>1</sup> We have seen how the laborers on the Thornborough estate were sold meat by their master, and that farm servants had meat at least once a day. There is also the fact that many laborers had a cow or pig of their own, which they doubtless used for meat on occasion.

Drink was not as excessive as in the south, despite the fact that it was a regular perquisite, given in addition to money wages. This may be due to the consumption of milk or whey, noted by Eden,<sup>2</sup> which Arthur Young sometimes found given with money wages instead of beer.<sup>3</sup> Defoe found during his tour that pale smooth ale was the chief drink of the north, though the consumption of beer was increasing.<sup>4</sup> Eden remarked on the greater number of ale houses in the south and the fact that the northern laborer got drunk only on special occasions, as a celebration. The consensus of opinion seems to be that the laborer spent less on drink than in the south and indulged less frequently in drinking bouts and intoxication. With industrial development, however, came an increase in the consumption of spirits and the accompanying problems of drunkenness, and ale houses. Campbell commented on the "ragged bare-legged children," and the "dirt and uncomfortable appearance among the lower orders of working people, especially about the towns and villages" in Lancashire, and laid it all to the expenditure of their high wages on liquor.

"Their pocket accounts, are, I believe, something like Falstaff's; with all their high earnings they do not afford themselves wheaten bread; all the lower orders eat oaten flat bread, worked with leaven; the stage above them,

<sup>1</sup> Eden, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 497, 525.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. I, pp. 542, 543.

<sup>3</sup> See the agricultural wages in Chapters IV and V.

<sup>4</sup> *Tour*, vol. III, p. 169.

and farmers, what they call jannoch, that is, loaf oaten bread, made as the other by leaven. All the poor children, and many of the grown people, eating treacle with their flat bread, because butter is too high priced for them; it cannot be spent in spirituous liquors and these articles also . . ."<sup>1</sup>

In 1792, the West Riding justices resolved to restrict licensing regulations, and impress their enforcement, because of the excesses committed in alehouses. They stated that "the Custom of drinking spirituous Liquors therein as well as in common Dram Shops continues everywhere to prevail," and that "Houses of this Kind but especially those which are actually licensed for retailing Drams only are kept open from early in the Mornings to late at Nights (Sundays not excepted) when a constant succession of Customers and too often of women and children are indiscriminately admitted."<sup>2</sup> This sounds suspiciously like conditions in London, and with the development of industrial centres, such problems were bound to grow.

### SOME ACTUAL BUDGETS

There are a good many northern budgets for the end of the century, collected by investigators such as Eden, Davies and the like. Some of the most interesting samples, which are from Davies, are worth quoting in detail. In 1789 three Lancashire families are described as follows:<sup>3</sup>

	I.	II.	III.
<i>Weekly Expenses</i>	(7 people in Great Eccleston)	(7 people in Preston)	(6 people in Garstang)
Bread from Oatmeal	3s.	3s.	3s.
Potatoes	6d.	9d.	6d.
Salt	1½d.	3d.	3d.
Bacon or other Meat	4d.	4d.	6d.
Tea, Sugar, Treacle, Butter	1s. 2d.	11½d.	11d.
Beer and Milk	5½d.	5d.	2d.
Soap, Starch and Blue	2½d.	4d.	4d.
Candles	3½d.	3½d.	3½d.
Thread, thrum, worsted	2d.	2d.	2d.
Total	6-3	6-6	6-1½

<sup>1</sup> Campbell's article on Lancashire, in vol. XX of *Annals of Agriculture*, pp. 137, 138.

<sup>2</sup> *Sessions Order Books* at Wakefield. The adjourned session of May 1792 held at Wakefield.

<sup>3</sup> Davies, David, *op. cit.*, Appendices.

Annual Expenses	£16- 5-0	£16-18-0	£15-18-6
Rent	2- 2-0	2- 0-0	1- 8-0
Fuel, Lying in, etc.	6-18-0	8- 7-0	7-14-0
Total Annual Expenses	£25- 5-0	£27- 5-0	£25- 0-8
<i>Weekly Earnings</i>	Great Eccleston	Preston	Garstang
Man (medium)	7s.	6s.6d.	7s.6d.
Woman (medium)	1s.	1s.	1s.6d.
Children (medium)	6d.	2s.	6d.
Total	8s.6d.	9s.6d.	9s.6d.
Annual Earnings	£22- 2-0	£24-14-0	£24-14-0
Annual Expenses	25- 5-0	27- 5-0	25- 0-8
Deficit	£3-3-0	£2-11-0	6-8

The Yorkshire budgets are all for Tharme and Chapel-Allerton near Leeds in the West Riding.<sup>1</sup>

<i>Weekly Expenses</i>	I (7)	IV (6)	V (7)
Bread and Flour	5s.3d.	4s.9d.	5s.6d.
Yeast and Salt	3½d.	3d.	3d.
Bacon and other Meat	1s.9d.	1s.	1s.6d.
Tea and Sugar	1s.	1s.	1s.
Cheese (seldom any)	.....	.....	.....
Beer (seldom any)	.....	.....	4d.
Soap, starch and blue	4d.	4d.	4d.
Candles	3d.	3d.	3d.
Thread, worsted, etc.	3d.	3d.	3d.
Milk	.....	6d.	1s.
Total	9s.1½d.	8s.4d.	10s.5d.
Annual Amount	£23-14-6	£21-13-4	£27- 1-8
Estimated Rent	1-10-0	1-10-0	1-10-0
Estimated Fuel	1- 0-0	1- 0-0	1- 0-0
Estimated Clothing	2-10-0	2-10-0	2-10-0
Estimated Lying in	1-12-0	1-12-0	1-12-0
Total Annual Expenses	30- 6-6	28- 5-4	33-13-8
<i>Weekly Earnings</i>			
Man (medium)	8s.	8s.	9s.
Woman (medium)	.....	.....	6d.
Children (medium)	1s.	6d.	1s.6d.
Total Annual Earnings	£23- 8-0	£22- 2-0	£28-12-0
Total Annual Expenses	30- 6-6	28- 5-4	33-13-8
Deficit	£6-18-6	£6- 3-4	£5- 1-8

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, see Appendices. These families of the six given by Davies have been selected so that the size of the family is the same as in the Lancashire budgets.



The uniform deficits of these budgets are noticeable. How they were met is not clear. Probably such additional receipts as those for perquisites, rent-free cottages, the paternal benevolence of masters, outstanding debts, or, in some cases, poor relief (though this less than in the south) made an insufficient income less evident in fact than on paper. The West Riding deficits are a great deal larger than those from Lancashire, due perhaps to the apparent higher standard of living in Yorkshire. These families may, of course, be representatives of a slightly different class from those in Lancashire. Their budgets included a greater expenditure on meat, tea, sugar, milk, and other items indicating a more highly developed taste. The annual earnings, it may be noted, were approximately the same for both districts, although the man in the West Riding had a higher wage.

Such budgets are of interest as samples, whether representative or otherwise, of the general expenditure of lower class families, and of separate items in particular. Rent, in these cases, ranged from £1.8.0 to two guineas a year. The latter was the amount paid by the regular laborer on the Thornborough estate in Leyburn and also by a Westmoreland family discussed by Eden.<sup>1</sup> A Bradford laborer in 1702 is recorded as having purchased a cottage valued at 20 shillings per annum.<sup>2</sup> It seems likely that a laborer paid about one or two guineas for his rent, unless he were as fortunate as some of the poor who were given cottages on the waste rent free.<sup>3</sup> This method of poor relief was practised in the north as in other parts of the county. Rents were not low in the north. In the vale of Pickering, Marshall called attention to their height, in comparison with the low rents in the vale of

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 767. A weaver's family in Kendal whose budget is listed among the others.

<sup>2</sup> *West Riding Order Books*, October Sessions, 1702. A petition of Josua Manley against a rate assessment.

<sup>3</sup> Examples — (from *West Riding Order Books*) the case of Susan Bedford of Huddersfield, October 1704; permission given to overseers of poor of Swinden to erect such cottages, July 1730. An Eccleshall laborer was allowed to continue his cottage, probably on the waste, though this is not stated specifically (October, 1701). Also see orders to build cottages in the January 1717/18 sessions at Helmsley, and the January 1724-25 sessions at Richmond in the *North Riding Quarter Sessions Records*, ed. by J. C. Atkinson, vol. VIII.



London.<sup>1</sup> High rents, however, were frequently more than compensated for by the common rights, and small gardens that went with northern cottages.

The cottages themselves, however, were nothing to be desired, according to Tuke's description. He said

"the dwellings of the labourers are generally small and low, consisting only of one room, and very rarely of two, both of which are level with the ground, and sometimes a step within it. This situation renders them damp, and frequently very unwholesome, and contributes with the smallness of the apartments, to injure the health both of parents and children, for in such contracted houses, numerous families are frequently compelled to reside. In the North Riding, the farmer is by no means well accommodated, but the labourer is much worse."<sup>2</sup>

An item of expenditure which had been to a great extent discontinued in other sections of the country was the payment of tithes. Marshall commented on the prevalence of the custom with some annoyance.<sup>3</sup> Its existence is shown by the regular accounts of tithes from 1756 to 1766 in the Thornborough estate book. These included a number of days mowing, all at 1s.6d. per day, and may have been given by the laborers, as their contribution to the tithes.

Clothes in the north were for the most part made at home, of rough wool and linen, and it was a mark of opulence, according to Eden, to buy a broadcloth coat. Clogs were universally worn and cost about three shillings a pair. Eden described the usual laboring dress in Cumberland as, for the man, a hat, coat, waistcoat, leather, flannel or colored cloth breeches, linen shirt, and woollen stockings. The women wore a cotton or linen neckcloth, two flannel petticoats (the upper one died blue), coarse woollen stockings, linen shift, stays, woollen stuff gowns, and black stuff hats. On Sundays they put on black silk hats and cotton gowns.<sup>4</sup> There is reason to think that the description applies not only to the Cumberland laborer, but to the dress of the lower classes in

<sup>1</sup> *Minutes . . . on Agriculture in the Southern Counties*, 1799, vol. I, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> *General View of Agriculture . . . of North Riding*, 1794, p. 80.

<sup>3</sup> *The Rural Economy of Yorkshire*, 1788, vol. I, pp. 90, 91.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 556, 557.

the north in general. The bills sent into the Quarter Sessions by the House of Correction for clothing the prisoners included similar items. For instance, in 1729, a poor boy was furnished with two new shirts (at 1s.3d.) two pairs of stockings (at 7d.), two pairs of shoes (2s.1d.), a hat (1s.2d.), and two pairs of breeches (at 1s. 6d.).<sup>1</sup> In 1784 the expense of clothing two women prisoners amounted to £1.2.8 and the bill included eleven yards of "stout woolsey," 12½ yards of "Home made Cloth," two checked handkerchiefs, and ten "Hanks thread."<sup>2</sup> Handkerchiefs seem to have had a fascination for laborers here, as in the south, and were frequently stolen. One John Anderson, a laborer, stole 24 printed linen handkerchiefs in 1777.<sup>3</sup> The Rev. William MacRitchie deplored the fact that in Lancashire, "many of the first looking country girls wear black stockings on the week-days, which is by no means an improvement to their charms."<sup>4</sup> The clothes worn in the north were undoubtedly rougher and less fashionable than those of the south. They were home made and less susceptible to change. Nevertheless the use of cotton was creeping in, as we see from Eden's description, for Sunday dresses for the women, and this was the opening wedge. Cotton brought with it cheaper clothes, less class distinction in dress, and the possibility of more frequent changes for the majority of the populace. The process, however, had only a slight beginning in the north at the end of the eighteenth century.

We found in other districts, especially in Kent and Surrey, that ordinary laborers and husbandmen owned a good many household possessions. Similar evidence leads one to the conclusion that the same situation existed in the north. In 1709 a laborer imprisoned in York Castle could offer the master of the House of Correction forty shillings and a gold ring as a bribe to

<sup>1</sup> *West Riding Sessions Rolls*, Wakefield, January, 1729, a House of Correction Bill.

<sup>2</sup> *North Riding Sessions Rolls*, New Malton, January, 1784.

<sup>3</sup> *North Riding Sessions Records*, ed. J. C. Atkinson, 1884, vol. IX. This and similar cases are listed under *Extracts from the Minute Book*, 1769 to 1786.

<sup>4</sup> *Diary of a Tour through Great Britain in 1795, 1897*, p. 40.

release a certain woman.<sup>1</sup> A Plompton husbandman deserted his family and, in the customary fashion, a distress was ordered levied upon the goods he had left behind. These included:

"One Long Settle one Shelf two little Tables one Rang one pair of Tongs one pair of Iron Briggs five pewter Dishes Six pewter plates one Cupboard Eight Shelves two pans one frying pan and other (-?) Two Bedsteads one cheese press one old Chest one axle tree two forks one Bed and part Bedding Six Chairs two Buffets one Chest one Seeing glass one Spinning Wheel one Table one pair of Tongs one Candlestick one Brogleing Iron one other Bed and part Bedding one old Trunk five Bushels of Wheat and Rye one half Bushel and one Scuttle part of a haystack in the Back side one stand (?) hech a parcell of straw and some manure in the Fold. . . ."<sup>2</sup>

This man had a wife and one child which he had left on the parish. His possessions were probably quite representative of those in the ordinary husbandman's cottage. He must have had some garden, and the possession of hay and so on would indicate that he had a cow or sheep, which he possibly grazed on the common.

In the same year one John Brooke of Liversidge absconded with his wife, and left five children chargeable to the parish. His possessions:

"One cow: one Bed Tick, Six pewter Dishes, Six pewter plates, one Mustard Box and a Flagon, an Iron pan, half a dozen of Chairs, one Table and one Bread Chist,"

were to be sold to reimburse the parish, and the surplus, if any, was ordered to be returned to Mr. Brooke, who had since come back.<sup>3</sup>

There were frequent petitions among the Sessions papers in which various people who had sustained damage to their property, by fire or flood, asked for relief from the Court. In 1738, William Booth of Bradsworth in the West Riding, a laborer, set forth in such a petition that he had lost upwards of £38.0.0 through a fire which had accidentally occurred in his house. The court

<sup>1</sup> *West Riding Order Books*, Wakefield, January 1708/9. Indictment of Robert Hall, laborer.

<sup>2</sup> *West Riding Order Books*, Pontefract, April, 1728.

<sup>3</sup> *West Riding Order Books*, Wakefield, January, 1728.

ordered the Treasurer to pay £6.2.6 towards the loss.<sup>1</sup> Again, another laborer, William Greenwood of Stansfield, had his house and effects swept away by flood in 1767 or 1768. He stated the damages at £21.7.6, and was given £5 as a gratuity by the county. The value set upon these possessions shows that some members of the lower classes, at least, were not without considerable household goods.

In attempting any estimate of the standard of living of the northern laborer, all such descriptive evidence as to the expenditure and possessions of this group must be given full place. Money wages, we have found, rose greatly after 1760, without a corresponding upward trend in the chief staple of the laborer's diet, bread. The discussion of perquisites — drink, common rights, free rent, and so on — led us to suppose that the statement of the family income in monetary terms is distinctly an understatement of the actual earnings. And when we add to this, the prevailing custom of the employment of women and children, we can only conclude that the family earnings, in terms of money and perquisites, would be considerably more than the daily wage rates indicate. We must, of course, allow for some loss of day work throughout the year, but, as far as opportunity is concerned, unemployment could not have been great. We may, indeed, conclude that the laborer and husbandman were fairly comfortably off, with a background of considerable perquisites and personal possessions. These probably changed little throughout century. Into this customary standard of life came a comparatively great increase in money wages, a result of the expanding commercial and industrial life of the north and its consequent demand for labor. From the evidence, the conclusion is clear that there was a marked rise in the standard of life among the lower classes of the north. Illustrative of this was the growing use of wheat bread, tea, sugar, of cotton clothes, and the greater expenditure, especially in Lancashire, upon drink. It is important to see whether contemporaries noticed any change in the living conditions of the lower classes at the time. The high wages in the

<sup>1</sup> *West Riding Order Books*, Doncaster, January, 1738.



latter part of the century came in for a good deal of comment, and similar observations on any noticeable changes in the standard of life would be expected.

### THE TREND OF THE STANDARD OF LIVING

As a matter of fact, there were such comments, and from contemporary descriptions of the lower classes in the north throughout the century we obtain the impression of a rising standard of life, most prevalent in the industrial districts. Thomas Percival, a Manchester doctor of some note, wrote in 1773 a summary of the health conditions of the city, with a discussion of vital statistics there during the century.<sup>1</sup> He concluded that

“there is good reason to believe that Manchester is more healthy now than formerly. The new streets are wide and spacious, the poor have larger and more commodious dwellings, and the increase of trade affords them better clothing and diet than they before enjoyed. I may add, too, that the late improvements in medicine have been highly favourable to the preservation of life.”<sup>2</sup>

Whether Percival really was as optimistic as this part of his statement would indicate is an open question, in view of his later remarks. However, even the mention of city improvements is some indication of an improving standard of life. It has too frequently been assumed that the migration of labor from the rural to the urban districts, especially into factories, meant less healthy and sanitary conditions of life. It is true, of course, that pictures of the condition of the factories, such as those drawn so vividly by the Hammonds,<sup>3</sup> had contemporary existence in fact. But it may be questioned whether the country cottages were much better. Tuke's description of a typical laborer's cottage is no model of sanitation or health. All eighteenth century sanitary

<sup>1</sup> *Observations on the State of the Population in Manchester*, 1773.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2. Wadsworth quotes from Percival to exactly the opposite effect. It is true that Percival also says:— “But it must be acknowledged that large towns are injurious to population; and the advantages I have enumerated, which in hamlets or country villages would have operated with full force to the benefit of mankind, have only served to check the destructive tendency of inhabitants in Manchester. . . .”

<sup>3</sup> See *The Town Labourer*, especially. Also Silliman's (*op. cit.*, p. 108) description of Manchester cotton workers.



conditions were indescribable, if judged by modern standards, and, as Percival points out, improvements came first and more quickly in the cities. Recent research, such as that done under the tutelage of Unwin,<sup>1</sup> points to the conclusion that the ills of industrial life, as compared to that in the country, have been frequently exaggerated. In many ways, a completely new town, such as Mellor, gave the opportunity for the development of healthful conditions such as the lower classes had never known before. Particularly was it true if the employers, like Oldknow or Robert Owen, were interested in social conditions. As Redford put it

"the difficulties attending the initial formation of the early industrial communities did not appear to offer much opportunity for the growth of a healthy social life. Yet the results were in many cases not unhappy. New Lanark, Deanston, Mellor, and Styal are not, perhaps, the worst specimens of industrial civilization . . ."<sup>2</sup>

Even Campbell, who was so strongly convinced of the degradation of the laborer in Lancashire, admitted, if only in a parenthesis, that there had been an "advance in manner of living and diet" among all classes.<sup>3</sup> Aikin gave instances of the introduction of luxury among Manchester manufacturers,<sup>4</sup> and considered that luxurious expenditure was becoming widespread, especially as the commercial contact between London and its northern counterpart increased.<sup>5</sup> Soame Jenyns, in trying to explain the prevailing high prices of the sixties, blamed it all upon the increase of luxury, particularly in the north. His remarks merit detailed quotation, as they represent not only a further description of northern conditions, but a common contemporary method of picturing the competition in consumption between the various classes:

"This effect of the increase of wealth in many countries of Europe, is very visible at this day, and in none more than in the northern parts of this island, who having of late acquired riches by the introductions of trade, manu-

<sup>1</sup> See *Samuel Oldknow and the Arkwrights* for the case history of a late eighteenth century factory, based on the original records, which gives a rather different point of view of the development of the factory system.

<sup>2</sup> *Labor Migration in England 1800-1850*, 1926, p. 30.

<sup>3</sup> Article in *Annals of Agriculture*, vol. XX, p. 133.

<sup>4</sup> Here he evidently means merchants and employers rather than the workmen.

<sup>5</sup> *A Description of the Country . . . round Manchester*, 1795, pp. 185, 186.

*factures, and tillage, can now well afford to eat roast beef, and therefore consume much of those cattle with which they were formerly glad to supply us; and will not part with the rest, but at prices greatly advanced. The consumption of everything is also amazingly increased from the increase of wealth in our metropolis, and indeed in every corner of this Kingdom; and the manner of living, throughout all ranks and conditions of men, is no less amazingly altered: the merchant who formerly thought himself fortunate, if in a course of thirty or forty years, by a large trade and strict economy, he amassed together as many thousand pounds, now acquires in a quarter of that time double that sum, or breaks for a greater, and vies all the while with the first of our nobility, in his houses, table, and furniture, and equipage: the shopkeeper who used to be well contented with one dish of meat, one fire, and one maid has now two or three times as many of each; his wife has her tea, her card parties, and her dressing-room; and his prentice has climbed from the kitchen-fire to the front-boxes at the play-house. The lowest manufacture and meanest mechanic will touch nothing but the very best pieces of meat and the finest white bread; and, if he cannot obtain double the wages for being idle, to what he formerly received for working hard, he thinks he has a right to seek for a redress of his grievances, by riot and rebellion . . ."*<sup>1</sup>

The competition between classes, another aspect of "apeing one's betters," was often noted, sadly or delightedly (depending on the mood or purpose of the writer)<sup>2</sup> by contemporary pamphleteers. It may be observed that it was described as being especially applicable to the north and to London. Both these areas were in the eighteenth century, the centre of expanding industry and trade, and a fast increasing population. Both were characterized by high wages. In fact, by the end of the century, Yorkshire and Lancashire daily rates, if the charts are compared, were not far below the London level, and luxury expenditure accompanied this relatively high earning power.

It may be surmised that the flexibility between classes, discussed in London in connection with the servant problem, was one of the chief mechanisms by which the increasing standards of living was communicated to the lower classes. It was essential also for providing a wider basis of selection of leaders in the industrial development of the north. Redford found that two apprentices at Styal became managers of the mill, and that the same

<sup>1</sup> *Thoughts on the Causes and Consequences of the Present High Prices*, London 1767 (2nd edition), pp. 11, 12.

<sup>2</sup> Defoe, for example, did both. See Chapter VII.

thing occurred at the Ironstone Mills.<sup>1</sup> The Rev. William MacRitchie, doubtless with some exaggeration, quoted examples of 'people rising every day from nothing to eminence, by dint of industry.'<sup>2</sup> In this particular passage he was referring to the opportunities for advancement in the Sheffield cutlery works. Further on, he recounted in his diary the following description of his evening's entertainment:

"Dress, and go with my friend to dine at the elegant country-seat of Mr. William Shore, a man whose grandfather was a common hammerman, and who now enjoys a fortune of some thousands a year. I was a good deal struck with the elegance and luxury of his table."<sup>3</sup>

Wadsworth cites a number of examples of merchants and manufacturers in the cotton industry who rose to fortune from a much lower social class. To quote:—

"Like the founders of the earlier dynasties they (the employing capitalists) begin in a humble way from the ranks of the farmer-weavers, and town workers or tradesmen, with a small slubbing mill, or a collection of hand-ooms and spinning jennies in a small warehouse."<sup>4</sup>

It would seem, if these examples are at all typical, that there was a constant and moving interrelation between the classes, such as was quite impossible, for example, in Kent. This was probably both a result and in turn a cause of the commercial and industrial expansion of the north. It meant a larger and more variable labor supply, and, moreover, one stimulated by a desire to secure the luxuries of the class above them. It is possible that the energetic and ambitious character of the lower classes had some notable part in determining the permanent success of the northern industrial expansion.

A similar suggestion is made by the author of the industrial history section in the *Victoria County History of York*. Her opinion, perhaps a trifle eulogistic, is that Yorkshire's industrial supremacy is due "neither to exceptional ability of its lawgivers,

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 67.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 280.

nor to the conspicuous talent of a few of its gifted inhabitants, but to the strenuous hard work, the frugality and self-denial of the bulk of the population of the county . . ."<sup>1</sup> Holt made the same comment about the "spirit of ingenuity and improvement" of the Lancashire people, especially the manufacturers. His explanation was more practical — "reward immediately ensues."<sup>2</sup> Before condemning these statements as due merely to local pride, it is well to remember that oft heard remark that much of England's industry and commerce today is in the hands of those who were, in origin, northerners. It is frequently asserted that the "City" is overrun, and successfully, with the Scotch and Yorkshire men. However that may be, the industrial development of the north progressed rapidly, drawing more and more laborers into its urban centres.

In conclusion, it is safe to affirm that the condition of the northern laborer markedly improved in the eighteenth century. Money wages rose at a comparatively swift rate after 1760, bringing the northern wage level nearly to that of London. This took place almost uniformly over Lancashire and the North and West Ridings of Yorkshire. There was no corresponding rise in the price of oats, or of wheat. As far as may be judged, except for particular bad years, prices did not rise noticeably until the nineties. In the north the laborer was possessed of many perquisites, which do not appear to have diminished throughout the century. There must also be considered the opportunities for the work of women and children, already more abundant and increasing with the advent of machines. Merely in terms of money, the family income of the laboring classes was certainly increasing throughout the century. Along with this, however, it must be noted that the development of a distinctly wage-earning class, dependent only on money wages, occurred in the industrial centres. In their case, the rise in money wages may not have compensated for the perquisites and small holdings they lacked. We cannot say with any certainty, therefore, whether in Manchester, or Leeds for example, the undoubted increase in money wages meant as great

<sup>1</sup> *Victoria County History of York*, 1912, vol. II, p. 337.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, 1794, p. 80.



an increase in the standard of living, as in the rural districts where the rise in wages took place, along with practically undiminished perquisites for the general unskilled laborer. The existence of wastes, the method of enclosure, the survival of the small holders in the north, long after the similar class in the south had been pushed out of existence — all these indicate the presence of considerable resources for the country laborer apart from his money wages. However, the fact that money wages were to some extent higher in the industrial districts, and that the development of industrial towns drew a steady stream of rural laborers into them leads to the inference that, despite the non-existence of perquisites, there existed the attraction of a higher standard of living in industry.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Redford comes to this conclusion in analyzing the stimulus to the labor migration in the early nineteenth century. *Op. cit.*, p. 60 and following discussion.





## PART III

### CONCLUSION AND THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS



## CHAPTER VIII

### SUMMARY. THE THREE DISTRICTS COMPARED

IN three very dissimilar districts, the course of the workers' daily wages in terms of money and estimates of real wages have been presented. No general tendency common to the three regions has been discovered. Not only the movement, but the levels of wages, differed. This fact is all the more important, as it was found that the regional divergence of the price of grain, used as the measure of real wages, was not marked. The course of wages, then, was little or not at all related to the movement of living costs.<sup>1</sup>

The situation in the three sections may be more accurately compared by referring to Chart 39 which exhibits representative series of the median daily wage rates of labor in these areas. Characteristic of all the series is stability of movement, particularly as it must be remembered that most of the short time fluctuations are probably due to errors of one sort or another, such as incomplete elimination of qualitative or regional differences within each series. The least variation is evidenced by the Oxford series for the west. The wage rate remained approximately at 1s.2d. from 1700 to 1770. Within the next ten years, a very small rise to 1s.4d. took place. The London figures were also fairly stable. What movement there was occurred before 1735. By that date the wage had risen from its initial position of 1s.8d. to 2s., after a more or less stable interval around the level of 1s.10d., from 1705 to 1720. The greatest amount of movement is shown by the series for the north. Starting at the low level of 8d., the wage had risen to 1s.9d., and in one instance to 2s., by 1790. In the early sixties the northern wage equalled and soon surpassed that

<sup>1</sup> Adam Smith observed that wages were entirely unrelated to the price of corn, particularly over a short period, in one of his many historical digressions. *Wealth of Nations*, Everyman ed., p. 66, vol I. This observation is certainly borne out by the wage and price statistics of this study.

of the west, and by the eighties it had approached the London level.

So far, no attempt has been made to estimate annual wages. At this stage, however, inadequacies of the data having been so frequently explained, such estimates may be risked. They may fix

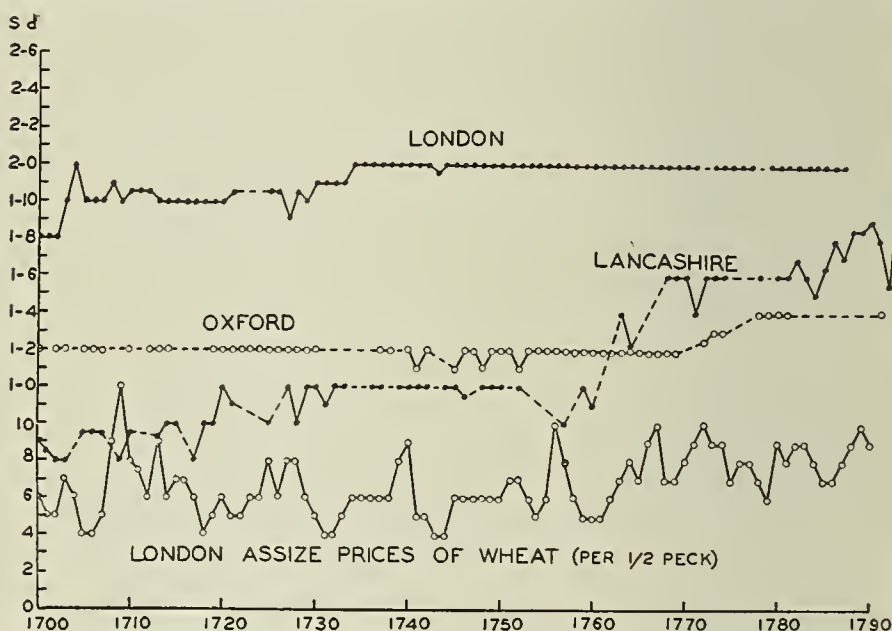


CHART 39—MEDIAN DAILY WAGE RATES OF LABOR IN THE NORTH, THE WEST, AND LONDON

more firmly in the mind of the reader the differences between the regions under analysis. The annual figures have been derived from the daily figures current at each date on the assumption of a 300 day working year:<sup>1</sup>

	<i>London</i>	<i>the West</i>	<i>the North</i>
1700	£25- 0-0	£17-10-0	£11- 5-0
1725	£27-10-0	£17-10-0	£13-15-0
1750	£30- 0-0	£17-10-0	£15- 0-0
1775	£30- 0-0	£18-15-0	£22-10-0
1790	£30- 0-0	£20- 0-0	£26- 5-0

From these estimates it may be seen that the northern wages show a continuous rise, and had more than doubled by the end of the century. In both London and the west wages went up compara-

<sup>1</sup> Such an assumption is probably liberal on the whole, but not out of line with various figures on employment which have been presented in previous chapters.



tively little, the difference being that the rise occurred during the first third of the century in London, and during the last third in the west.

These wages represent the earnings of the man of the family alone. To them must be added the supplementary earnings of other members of the family. Evidence as to the opportunity for additional earnings by women and children makes it clear that they formed an important part of the total family income in the north, and, at least for the early part of the century, in the west. Children were employed for picking up stones in the roads and for simple tasks in agriculture, usually at a rate around 3d. or 4d. a day. Women frequently did the same work, and in the north were also used for haying, scaling (spreading manure) and various more difficult agricultural occupations. Perhaps their greatest source of extra money was, however, spinning and knitting in the homes, or other subsidiary tasks of the textile industries. As the western woollen industry declined, the chance of earning additional income in this way diminished, whereas, in the north, as the putting out system gave place to the factory system, women were in even greater demand for the early factories. In agriculture women earned anywhere from 6d. to 10d. a day, and sometimes more in the harvest. If a family of six, man, wife, and four children, is again assumed to be approximately average, then the work of the wife and two children probably brought in as much again as the man could earn. Total family income for the west and north, therefore, may be considered to have been practically double that estimated above.

In London, however, the importance of supplementary family income was almost nil. Industry was tending to leave London and its environs — witness the complaints of the Spitalfield silk weavers<sup>1</sup> — and the city had never offered as much opportunity for the work of women and children as the more rural or the more strictly industrial districts. The annual income of the London worker, therefore, could not have been greatly increased by the work of other members of his family, but he may have had the

<sup>1</sup> See *The Poor Weavers' Complaint*.

chance to do work requiring greater skill and have received somewhat higher wages.

In the matter of perquisites the London laborer also had very little to rely on. Even the custom of giving drink to laborers on buildings and roads began to decrease as the century went on. Far from living in a small cottage, as laborers did in Kent and Surrey, he and his family were fortunate to have a furnished room. A garden, of course, was impossible in London for the poorer classes. Despite the lack of perquisites and supplementary income, there is reason to think that the London laborer improved his standard of life during the century. The decrease in wheat prices of the first half of the century, when his wages rose slightly, afforded surplus income. For some thirty years the surplus was apparently spent in gin, but after that other commodities of a more healthy nature took their place in the budget. The London laborer had the first chance to partake of such commodities and contemporary evidence appears to show that he did. Places of amusement and clubs were more frequent and accessible than in the country and the chance to rise in society more possible in the shifting social structure of the metropolis. On the whole the position of the London working classes was better at the end of the century than at the beginning.

The laborer in the west was not markedly assisted by the existence of perquisites and the opportunity for family earnings, partly due to the fact that many of the perquisites such as drink and food were not given in addition to money wages, but in lieu of money wages. Contemporary writers agree that wages in the west were relatively low. It was in the west, too, that years of bad harvest were particularly hard, the price of grain rising to greater heights than in any other section examined here. In fact, all the evidence concerning the condition of the western laborer points to the existence of a low standard of living, with no improvement, and perhaps even retrogression, during the eighteenth century.

The case of the northern laborer is quite different. Money wages rose decisively throughout the century. Except for the period between 1730 and 1750, wages were on the upgrade to an

extent somewhat unusual, considering the general stability of wage levels. The opportunity for supplementary earnings by women and children was greatest in the north, and perquisites were more frequent. The existence of moors and the continuance of feudal rights thereon enabled many a laborer to keep a cow or a pig for a negligible upkeep. Even in the new industrial towns, to which the laborer drifted at an increasing rate, it is not certain that conditions were as bad as they have been made out. Improvements in sanitary conditions were being made, and at least a few of the new mill owners enabled their employees, particularly the children, to have some education. However that may be, there is no doubt that the standard of living of the working classes of the north was improving steadily throughout the century. Other evidence corroborates that from the money wages.

In the case of the craftsmen's wages regional differences were not quite as marked. The London level was much higher than that of any other, starting at 2s.6d. in 1700 and rising to 3s. by 1720, while the wage rates for craftsmen in the other two sections varied for the most part between 1s.6d. and 2s. during the century. Certain differences existed, as, for instance, the fluctuation about 1s.6d. in Gloucestershire from 1750 to 1775, the 1s. rate which occurred in the north at the beginning of the century, and the fact that the Exeter and Oxford rates varied between 1s.8d. and 2s.4d., a somewhat higher level than in Gloucestershire. Vaguely the same regional divergences appear as in the laborers' wages, a difference of twopence between town and country, a lower level of fluctuation in Gloucestershire, and the rise from the lowest level of all in the north to the usual rate. Only in the north is the movement of the median craftsmen's wage at all similar to the course of laborers' wages. But the London level was never approached by the craftsmen's wages even in the north, and the range of variation in the other districts was fairly uniform. All of the craftsmen's series show greater short time fluctuations than the series for labor. The primary explanation lies in the difficulty of eliminating qualitative variations from the craftsmen's series, a difficulty much more serious

than in the case of the laborers' wages. It was almost impossible to differentiate accurately between the degrees of skill encompassed in the term "mason" or "carpenter." Master craftsmen were indicated clearly, for the most part, but varying types of journeymen, helpers, etc. could not be distinguished in the bills. Naturally the movements of the series are obscured by these qualitative differences and in this fact may well be found the reason for the lack of clear regional divergence among craftsmen.

One of the main conclusions established by this study is the outstanding regional divergence, not only in money wages, but in the standard of living of the working classes in England of the eighteenth century. Differences existed within the three main areas analyzed here, as well as between them. Again, it may be stated that as a general rule wages were higher in the cities. The Oxford and Exeter rates, for instance, were twopence above rates in the rest of the counties. Wages decreased in the London area, as the distance from the metropolis increased. In the north also, Manchester and other cities of the industrial district were found to pay the highest wages. There was also a difference in wage rates within certain localities. The moorland of the north and the Forest of Dean in the west, for instance, were among those in which slightly lower wages were general.

The results of the present inquiry, however, do not warrant any conclusion as to a general movement of wages for the whole of England; differences appear much more striking than a general tendency. It is true that Lecky, who was certainly a most astute observer of historical fact, concluded that the standard of living of the industrial classes, even in "the humbler ranks" had definitely improved in the eighteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Prothero, the Webbs, Alfred Marshall, Adam Smith, and Malthus note a rise in the standard of living in the working classes in this period.<sup>2</sup> So far

<sup>1</sup> Lecky, W. E. H., *History of England in the 18th Century*, London, 1892, vol. VII, p. 239.

<sup>2</sup> Prothero, R. E. (Lord Ernle), *English Farming Past and Present*, London, 1927, pp. 148-9.

Webb, S. and B., *English Poor Law History*, Part I, London, 1927, pp. 420-21.

Marshall, A., *Principles of Economics* (8th ed.), London, 1922, pp. 174, 175, 177.



as the present study goes, however, it can only be said that in three of the most important sections of England, the situation of the laboring population was highly diverse. The lot of the northern laborer became continually more favorable; that of the western laborer worse; while the London working man more than managed to hold his own.

This regional differentiation of wages and standards of living is somewhat at variance with previous estimates of the state of the laborer in eighteenth century England. The only other statistical work which covers the century is that of Thorold Rogers, and of Steffen, who used Rogers' figures, supplemented by Tooke, Eden, Young, and other sources for the eighteenth century. Steffen computed ten year averages of the purchasing power of various grades of labor in terms of wheat and wheat-meat, from 1250 to 1900. Based as they are primarily on Rogers' wage and price material, these indexes are subject to the criticism so often urged against Rogers' statistical work. No attempt was made to separate the original figures qualitatively or by regions. Certainly in the eighteenth century his averages were at various periods weighted at random by one region or another. Still it is not without interest to compare Steffen's results with our own. His series for the agricultural worker<sup>1</sup> shows a slight rise of purchasing power in terms of wheat from 1700 to 1750, and a somewhat steeper decline from 1750 to 1800. The series for carpenters has the same movement considerably accentuated. The only series of ours which fit in with this movement are those for the west. In the north there was an almost continuous rise in the purchasing power of wages in terms of wheat or oats, and in London there was no decrease and possibly an increase.

Steffen's and Rogers' averages support those who have argued that a rise in real wages took place in the first half of the eighteenth century followed by a decline. The Hammonds are the

Malthus, T. R., *Principles of Political Economy* (2nd ed.), London, 1836, p. 228.

Smith, Adam, *The Wealth of Nations* (Everyman ed.), Book I, p. 183.

But they are all inclined to emphasize particularly the first half of the century as the "golden age" of labor.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, Chart II, p. 112.



chief upholders of this contention<sup>1</sup> and have been followed by number of others.<sup>2</sup> The Hammonds in particular comment in glowing terms upon the situation of the laborer in the first fifty years of the century and as gloomily on his state from 1750 on. For the most part, the statements concerning the early part of the century originate in the eulogies of Smith and Malthus, and are based upon the fact of declining wheat prices from 1710 to 1755. They are supported by the Rogers-Steffen data, but these, as we have seen, cannot be relied upon. Apart from this unreliability, we have found that most of the working classes were not eating wheat bread until the latter part of the century, so that declining wheat prices in themselves must have had small effect upon the consumption of the lower classes in many parts of the country. In the west chiefly barley bread was eaten, and in the north oat bread. Even if wheat is taken as the measure of real wages from the beginning of the century, our data give no warrant for any conclusion for England as a whole. The purchasing power of the northern laborer, for instance, was greater, even for wheat, after 1750 than before.

The dark view of the end of the century has as little general warrant as the eulogies of the beginning. Certainly *some* laborers were dispossessed by enclosures, and exploited in the early factories. We cannot agree with the Hammonds, however, that these laborers were typical. Beside the picture of distressing conditions, we place our data on the rising standard of living of the general unskilled labor of the north. The condition in different sections of the country must be differentiated.

A few contemporary writers were clearly aware of the regional nature of the wage problem, but most of them and most of the later historians have attempted to generalize conditions to include the whole country. Roger North,<sup>3</sup> Defoe,<sup>4</sup> and Arthur Young, among others,<sup>5</sup> discussed the variation of wages in differ-

<sup>1</sup> See *The Village Laborer*, and *The Town Laborer*.

<sup>2</sup> For example, Hewins, W. A. S., *English Trade and Finance*, 1892, pp. 114-117.

<sup>3</sup> *A Discourse of the Poor*, London, 1753, p. 61.

<sup>4</sup> *Giving Alms No Charity*, London, 1704, p. 11.

<sup>5</sup> Adam Smith saw clearly the regional nature of wages at this period. See *Wealth of Nations*, Everyman edition, p. 66.

ent parts of England. Young's experience in analyzing and averaging the numerous figures which he collected on his tours made it impossible for him to neglect the regional aspects of wages. He comments as follows:

"The *labouring poor* is a term that none but the most superficial of reasoners can use; it is a term that means nothing. When it is asserted so and so of the labouring poor, which are to be understood; those that are fed at 2d. 3d. or 4d. *per* average pound? It is impossible that the same facts and reasoning should be applicable to all; and yet these distinctions have never been made by any of those numerous writers that have published so much on the subject . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Young was here protesting against the blanket remedies which many of his colleagues were proposing for the relief of the poor all over the country. He himself felt that general remedies could not be applied to all laborers when their condition of work and life differed so greatly in various parts of the country. His findings were borne out by the report on laborers' wages published in 1824.<sup>2</sup> The committee found many local differences in the amount and method of paying agricultural wages throughout England. The evidence of Mr. McAdam, an experienced surveyor, testified to the regional divergence in wage rates.<sup>3</sup>

Our data confirm Young's remarks. It is evident that regional variation of wages was of paramount importance in the eighteenth century. Generalizations as to what happened to English wages as a whole must at present meet no little scepticism. In the next chapter, the reasons for such variation will be examined in some detail, with attention to the relation between the theory of wages, demand, and general economic growth.

<sup>1</sup> A . . . *Tour through the North of England*, 1771, vol. IV, pp. 312, 313.

<sup>2</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on Labourers Wages*, 1824, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

## CHAPTER IX

### WAGES AND THE DEMAND FOR LABOR

THE eighteenth century discussion of standards of living, the growth of new wants, and the effect of these new wants upon the various classes of society, came for the most part under the head of luxury. The subject was one of universal controversy among eighteenth century pamphleteers. Under that heading were classed the new commodities which the poor were beginning to consume, as well as the foreign imports which permeated the consumption of all classes. Luxury was seen as indicative of an expanded consumption, and a number of writers were disapproving, largely for mercantilist reasons.<sup>1</sup> The luxury of the lower classes was particularly bemoaned. This continued insistence on the increasing luxury of the laborers may be taken as an indication of the fact that their standard of living was rising, at least in some parts of the country. The growth of consumption was emphasized by so many writers, as Lecky says, that it must have had some basis in fact.

Luxury is used as an all inclusive term by most of the eighteenth century writers. As applied to the lower classes, it seems to have meant, by implication, the inclusion of articles in the working class budget which were "above their station in life." A very shrewd, as well as amusing definition of luxury is set forth by Mandeville:<sup>2</sup>

"If everything is to be Luxury (as in strictness it ought) that is not immediately necessary to make Man subsist as he is a living Creature, there is nothing else to be found in this World, no not even among the naked Savages; . . . This Definition everybody will say is too rigorous; I am of the same Opinion; but if we are to abate one Inch of this Severity I am afraid we shan't know when to stop. When people tell us they only desire to keep themselves sweet and clean, there is no understanding what they would be

<sup>1</sup> Viner comments (*op. cit.*, p. 274) that much of the contemporary opposition to luxury was moral rather than economic in origin. This is undoubtedly true, but, on the whole, the economic argument took precedence.

<sup>2</sup> *Fable of the Bees* (ed. by Kaye, 7th ed.). Remark L, pp. 108, 109, vol. I.

at; . . . The Comforts of Life are likewise so various, that nobody can tell what People mean by them, except he knows what sort of life they lead . . . People may go to Church together and be all of one Mind as much as they please, I am apt to believe that when they pray for their daily Bread, the Bishop includes several things in that Petition which the Sexton does not think on."

Luxury is here any consumption above the necessities of physical existence, a rather broad definition of the term. Mandeville brings out its relativity to the standard of living of each group, its dependence upon time and place and social customs. Luxury, in this sense, may be said to include the elements of demand of a group which are subject to change.

The eighteenth century pamphleteers were loud in their condemnation of the growth of luxury among the poor. The increasing use of wheat bread, tea, sugar, butter, as well as various other amenities of life was frowned upon. People like John Cary, Josiah Tucker, Henry Fielding, and the author of a "Political Enquiry into the Consequences of Enclosing Waste Lands," among many others, declaimed against the extravagance of the lower classes.<sup>1</sup> Archenholz, William Davis and William Wales decried the extravagance in matters of dress so noticeable (to their social superiors) among the poor. Davis remarked that<sup>2</sup>

"A fondness for Dress may be said to be the folly of the age, and it is to be lamented, that it has nearly destroyed those becoming marks whereby the several classes of society were formerly distinguished."

The mercantilists bewailed especially the growth of foreign luxury; the amount spent, as Chamberlayne put it, for the "toys and trumperies of other nations".<sup>3</sup> Many of them protested they had little opposition to luxury as such, but only to that which

<sup>1</sup> See Cary, *An Essay towards Regulating Trade* . . ., London, 1717, p. 5.

Tucker, *A Brief Essay . . . on Trade* (3rd edition), London, 1753, pp. 351, 352.

Fielding, *An Enquiry . . . into the Increase of Robbers*, London, 1751, Preface, p. xi.

..... *A Political Enquiry* . . ., London, 1785, p. 75.

<sup>2</sup> Archenholz, *A Picture of England* (trans.), London, 1797, pp. 316, 317.

Wales, *An Enquiry into the Present State of Population* . . ., London, 1781, pp. 76, 77.

Davis, *Friendly Advice to Industrious and Frugal Persons* (4th ed.), 1817, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> See any edition of *Angliae Notitia*.



drew the specie out of England. They felt about French goods much as Berkeley about drink — "whether if drunkenness be a necessary evil men may not as well drink the growth of their own country?"<sup>1</sup> Prominent mercantilists such as John Chamberlayne, Joshua Gee, and Jonas Hanway amused themselves by estimating how much money was drawn out of the country due to the consumption of foreign luxuries, and lamenting the size of the total.<sup>2</sup> Gee urged a tax on luxury to check this increasing expenditure, and Sir Mathew Decker suggested sumptuary laws, taxes on spirits, tea, coffee, and chocolate for more moral and less mercantilist reasons. This was to "mend our servants' manners, by curing their luxury or making them pay for it". Decker realized that such sumptuary laws were a species of class legislation and approved: "Few that can afford to live high will retrench; those that cannot afford it should be obliged to it; this will be a sumptuary-law to keep all people in their proper station."<sup>3</sup>

The reason for the disapproval of the growth of luxury among the lower classes was mercantilist at bottom, though not always consciously so. The laboring classes were considered the instruments of national production, and cheap production was necessary to hold foreign markets against competition. Therefore, anything which tended to increase the laborers' standard of living so that he would demand more wages, or which made him less content to work and keep his accustomed place, was a source of real anxiety to the commercial classes.<sup>4</sup> They claimed that luxury did both. That a demand for higher wages, as well as idleness and discontent were the results of its introduction. With John Cary they felt that "Sloth and a Desire of Ease is the principal

<sup>1</sup> *Querist*, Query No. 113.

<sup>2</sup> See *Angliae Notitia*, Gee's *Trade and Navigation of Great Britain*, 1757, and Hanway's *Essay on Tea*.

<sup>3</sup> *An Essay on the Causes of the Decline of Foreign Trade*, London, 1750, pp. 218-228.

<sup>4</sup> See Furniss, pp. 153, 154 and following, for clear statement of this point of view; also E. A. J. Johnson, "Unemployment and Consumption: The Mercantilist View", *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, August 1932. Johnson emphasizes the undesirable effect of luxury upon the worker rather than the resulting effect upon the balance of trade.



Cause; (of distaste for labor) which appears by People's setting themselves on such ways of Living as our Forefathers would have been ashamed of . . ."<sup>1</sup> Most of them agreed with William Temple that "the only way to make them (the laborers) temperate and industrious, is to lay them under the necessity of labouring all the time they can spare from meals and sleep, in order to procure the common necessaries of life."<sup>2</sup>

The other view, however, that luxury is a stimulus to industry, was not without its advocates, even in the prevailing mercantilism of the period. Indeed, Temple admitted that new wants were a stimulus to labor, in all ranks of society *above* the lower orders.<sup>3</sup> Defoe, as might be expected, argued with equal conviction on both sides of the question. In *The Great Law of Subordination and Giving Alms No Charity* he said the usual thing about the close correlation between luxury and sloth. In a later work he admitted that the cause of idleness among the poor was often their very poverty, and their lack of desire for better things, and emphasized the importance of the consumption of the poor in stimulating trade and industry. He advocated, in fact, greater consumption among the lower classes as a large factor in increasing demand.<sup>4</sup>

The same contradiction is to be found in Arthur Young. In his *Political Arithmetic* he spent a great deal of time and space proving that luxury was a thoroughly good thing. Luxury or waste, anything which created demand, and thus stimulated agriculture and industry, was only to be praised ". . . what difference is there between *waste* and *regular consumption*? . . . All these *methods* of consumption are nothing to the farmer. The mere purchase of the commodities is what encourages him, in consequence of which he sets heartily about a further production of them."<sup>5</sup> And Young went so far as to say that "our political moralists are ever inveighing against luxury, I think with very

<sup>1</sup> *An Essay on the State of England*, London, 1695, p. 153.

<sup>2</sup> *A Vindication of Commerce and the Arts*, p. 534.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 503-505.

<sup>4</sup> *Extracts from a Plan of English Commerce* (McCulloch's edition), 1730, p. 123 and pp. 140, 142.

<sup>5</sup> *Political Arithmetic*, 1774, pp. 56-61.

little reason. And I entirely agree with a writer (Sir W. Temple), who gives his opinion in the following passage: 'A clean shirt and a laced hat are not inconsistent with piety and virtue. . . .'<sup>1</sup> After all this, Young's pious condemnation of the luxuries of the poor seems distinctly out of place. In all his *Tours*, and in 1768 and 1798, he cannot be sufficiently critical of the members of the laboring classes who dare to drink tea and eat wheat bread.<sup>2</sup> After insisting that the prices of necessities had not gone up and that the poor could not possibly be badly off (in 1768; he changed his mind in later years), he wrote: "It may be said, that wheaten-bread, that beef, that mutton, that sugar, that butter are dear; but do not in the height of an argument, jumble these and the necessities of life together."<sup>3</sup>

Writers like Sir Dudley North, Nicholas Barbon, Josiah Tucker, Adam Smith, and William Wales openly advocated the function of new wants and luxury as stimuli to greater labor. They were really members of the Mandevillian school. The discussion of luxury was, in fact, given a new significance by the publication of Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees*.<sup>4</sup> Those who had written upon the subject had apparently assumed that luxury was something which England could cultivate or not at will. Mandeville pointed out that luxury (or increasing consumption) was the inevitable accompaniment of commercial and industrial expansion, and that mercantilists and moralists alike disparaged it in vain. This

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, footnote on p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> See *The Farmer's Letters*, 1768, and *An Enquiry into the State of the Public Mind amongst the Lower Classes*, London, 1798.

<sup>3</sup> *The Farmer's Letters*, 1768, p. 202.

<sup>4</sup> First edition 1714. See F. B. Kaye's edition, Oxford, 1924, in two volumes. The *Fable* was written in rollicking verse, in the form of a parable. It described

"A Spacious Hive well stockt with Bees—  
That lived in Luxury and Ease—"

But this prosperity was based on private and internal vice; dishonest dealings gave business to the courts; luxury, envy, and pride stimulated industry. One of the bees discovered that the hive owed its well-being to vice, and reformers cried out against such a state. The bees decided to be honest and content with the necessities of life and as a result, trade and industry vanished. The hypothetical bees flew away to a hollow tree to live in "perfect Content and Honesty", and incidentally, in a state of primitive simplicity. The hive was obviously a representation of England, and contemporaries did not miss the point of the parable.

view follows logically from his definition of luxury as consumption above physical necessity. The idea was unpleasant to the mercantilists, who feared that the spread of luxury in general would upset the morals of the lower classes, and foreign luxury the balance of trade. The moralists, who considered luxury an absolute vice were just as displeased. They wished everyone to be content with the things he had always had, and not interested in trying out new commodities. The *Fable of the Bees* was answered from all sides by indignant pamphleteers. Mandeville responded with a new edition which included his *Remarks*, which expanded and defended in prose the ideas he had previously set forth in verse.

Although Mandeville referred frequently to the fact that luxury employed the poor, it is not at all certain that he upheld the "make-work" theory. Kaye insists that he did not<sup>1</sup> and this contention finds support in Mandeville's own definition of luxury quoted above. Mandeville seems to have thought of luxury in the very broad sense of all consumption above the sheer necessities of physical existence, and emphasized the fact that increasing luxury was really increasing demand. The make-work theory is, however, based on a more restricted definition of luxury, and usually refers to the luxury of the rich, which is supposed to afford employment for the poor which they would not otherwise have had. Mandeville did not entirely avoid this type of reasoning, but he continually insisted that luxury was one of the chief factors in increasing consumption in general, and thus in stimulating industry. He went back to the motives of pride and vanity as fundamental incentives to consumption, and said that without them no one would consume luxuries, with resulting unemployment. "No Body would dress above his Condition — and consequently there would not be half the Consumption, nor a Third Part of the People Employed as now there are."<sup>2</sup> This is broader than the usual make-work theory. Mandeville was ob-

<sup>1</sup> Kaye thinks that Mandeville was merely giving another illustration of his general paradox, that evil (luxury) is often accompanied by good (employment of the poor).

<sup>2</sup> Kaye's edition, Remark M, p. 129.

viously emphasizing the expansion of consumption, or demand in general, rather than that of a particular class. Hume opposed the idea that luxury was in itself a vice; it could be good or bad according to its uses. He defined the term as meaning "great refinement in the gratification of the senses"<sup>1</sup> and stated that such refinement was an indication of civilization. At the same time he clearly believed in the make-work theory.

"The increase and consumption of all the commodities, which serve to the ornament and pleasure of life, are advantageous to society; because, at the same time that they multiply those innocent gratifications to individuals, they are a kind of storehouse of labor, which, in the exigencies of state, may be turned to the public service."<sup>2</sup>

It is implied that luxury employs those who would otherwise have no work, thus strengthening the nation by increasing its available labor power. Even if luxury results from vice "in the present imperfect state of society — (it) seems to be the only likely means to promote the industry of others, and correct the unequal distribution of property."<sup>3</sup> This correction is made by giving work on luxury goods to many who are unemployed. Hume admits that if property were equally divided, this argument would not hold, and that everyone would enjoy "the necessities and most of the comforts of life" without resorting to such an artificial stimulus. But since man is unequal by nature, equal property distribution is a hopeless dream, and the imperfections of human nature make luxury necessary. Clearly Hume's definition of luxury is not as broad as Mandeville's, although he shared with Mandeville the idea that luxury is an indispensable accompaniment of the growth of an industrial nation.

The controversy caused by Mandeville helped to clarify contemporary ideas on luxury and made it easier for those who believed that luxury was really a blessing. While Mandeville called it a "private vice", he was quite evidently poking fun at those moralists who really considered it such. After Mandeville there were more to agree with Sir Francis Brewster that ". . . If

<sup>1</sup> "On Luxury" in *Political Essays*, London, 1816, p. 167.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 172.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 179.



Lords lived as Commoners, Commoners would never be Lords: And perhaps if there was no room for Ambition, there might not be so much Industry."<sup>1</sup>

It is from the Rev. J. Howlett, however, that there comes the most direct answer to those who held that necessity was the only stimulus to industry among the laboring classes:

"The Poor are neither brutes nor fools . . . If capable, then by assiduous application, of earning something more than is adequate to their immediate necessities, will they work only three or four days in the week and spend the rest in idleness and riot, in drunkenness and debauchery? Give them common sense, allow them the common feelings and sentiments of men . . . and they certainly will not. They are not without sensibility of the comforts and conveniences of life; the hopes of securing them will be a perpetual stimulus for making provision for future contingencies . . ."<sup>2</sup>

The phenomenon of the lessening of the rigidity of class barriers was frequently noted by eighteenth century writers. We have mentioned it before in the sections dealing with London and the north.<sup>3</sup> From an economic point of view it was manifested in the ability of a number of individuals to rise from the laboring classes to positions of more or less responsibility in the industrial and commercial world. It is difficult to say how general it was, but it occurred frequently enough to receive considerable comment, especially in the north. From the point of view of consumption, the flexibility of the class structure was seen in the process which Defoe and others called "apeing one's betters". It was particularly prevalent in London, where servants were the chief intermediaries between their masters and the lower classes in spreading standards of conspicuous consumption. Such emu-

<sup>1</sup> *Essay on Trade and Navigation*, London, 1694, 1695, p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> *The Insufficiency of the Causes to which the Increase of the Poor . . . have been Commonly Ascribed*, London, 1788, pp. 54, 55. Adam Smith expressed a similar point of view (*Wealth of Nations*, Everyman edition, vol. I, p. 73). "The wages of labour are the encouragement of industry, which like every other human quality, improves in proportion to the encouragement it receives. A plentiful subsistence increases the bodily strength of the labourer and the comfortable hope of bettering his condition, and of ending his days perhaps in ease and plenty, animates him to exert that strength to the utmost. Where wages are high, accordingly, we shall always find the workmen more active, diligent, and expeditious than when they are low . . ." Smith went on to refute the belief that high wages caused universal idleness among the workmen.

<sup>3</sup> See Chapters I and VII.



lation is only possible in a dynamic society where class barriers are fairly elastic, where surplus income is available, and where ambition is to be found in the spirit of the imitators.

Apeing one's betters, however, does not mean imitation of the highest group in the social scale by the lowest. It is rather the imitation of the next class above. The laborer could not imitate the lord directly. In the country he would probably emulate the small farmer, the small farmer in turn the squire, and so on up the social ladder. There were many complaints about the difficulty of telling laborers and small farmers apart; and the different grades of the gentry. In a city, the laborer would model himself after the small tradesman, or craftsman, or more likely, a gentleman's servant. One emulates those whom one might possibly become, without too great a stretch of the imagination.

Fielding described the hierarchy as follows:<sup>1</sup>

"... thus while the Nobleman will emulate the Grandeur of a Prince the Gentleman will aspire to the proper State of Nobleman, the Tradesman stepd from behind his Counter into the Vacant Place of the Gentleman..."

and so on down the social scale. Those who were against the spread of luxury were as much concerned with this phenomenon and as eager to condemn it. Moral reformers like Hanway and Hannah More begged the "Great" to set an example to the poor by eschewing luxury and extravagance.

"Reformation must begin with the GREAT," wrote Hannah More in large capitals, "or it will never be effectual. *Their* example is the fountain from whence the vulgar draw their habits, actions and characters. To expect to reform the poor while the opulent are corrupt, is to throw odours into the stream while the springs are poisoned."<sup>2</sup>

## II

Wages may be looked upon as a production cost, as a distributive share, or as one of the chief elements in the community's demand for goods. These aspects are, of course, but facets of the same thing. The mercantilists, as the previous section makes

<sup>1</sup> *Enquiry into . . . Increase of Robbers*, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Thoughts on the Importance of the Manners of the Great* (4th edition), London, 1788, p. 70. Cf. also Defoe, *The Poor Man's Plea*.

clear, regarded wages largely as a cost of production. Almost their only interest in the luxury controversy was the fear that increased real wages would raise the prices of exports and thus endanger the economic position of the nation. However, as the discussion went on through the century, a distinct shift in point of view is discernible. Even some of the mercantilists began to look upon high wages from the point of view of demand and to realize that an increase in real wages means expanded consumption. But again they saw the problem entirely from the mercantilist angle. They were afraid that the higher wages would be spent for foreign and not for domestic goods. The opponents of the strictly mercantilist viewpoint — and they became more frequent towards the end of the century — anticipated to some extent the modern high wage argument. They advocated high wages as a stimulus to “industry”, by which they meant the efficiency of the laborer. A few appeared to see wages from a still broader aspect, as a part of consumers’ demand in general. From this point of view, increased wages may provide a wider market for goods and thus stimulate the whole industrial system. Many eighteenth century pamphleteers saw this, especially after the Mandeville discussion, and high wages, as evidence of expanding consumption, came to be considered an economic asset.

In this argument, as in many others, Malthus allied himself with the modern side.<sup>1</sup> He was keenly aware of the fact that increased wages may raise the standard of living and prove an incentive to industrial efficiency. His statement is particularly interesting since he is far better known for his emphasis upon the pressure of population upon subsistence, with the possibility, later admitted, that the standard of living may act as a check to population increase. The last chapter of the *Political Economy* reveals that Malthus saw the positive force of the standard of living as well as the negative. He says:

<sup>1</sup> See J. M. Keynes, *Essays in Biography*, for a charming sketch of Malthus, which brings out several points in which he anticipates modern doctrine. Since reading the *Political Economy* eight years ago for the first time, I too have felt that it is regrettable that economic tradition has followed Ricardo and not Malthus.

" . . . the main part of the question respecting the wants of mankind, relates to their power of calling forth the exertions necessary to acquire the means of expenditure. It is unquestionably true that wealth produces wants, but it is a still more important truth that wants produce wealth. Each cause acts and reacts upon the other, *but the order both of precedence and of importance is with the wants which stimulate to industry . . .*"<sup>1</sup>

Malthus went even further and suggested that individuals will endure unpleasant working conditions in order to raise their level of consumption.

"It is not the most pleasant employment to spend eight hours a day in a counting house. Nor will it be submitted to after the common necessities and conveniences of life are obtained, unless adequate motives are presented to the mind of the man of business. Among these motives is undoubtedly the desire of advancing his rank, and contending with the landlords in the enjoyment of leisure, as well as of foreign and domestic luxuries."<sup>2</sup>

The economy of high wages has received considerable attention in connection with modern economic conditions.<sup>3</sup> Douglas in his new book analyses the relation of high wages to the marginal productivity theory.<sup>4</sup> He concludes that the effect of high wages upon labor efficiency has been overemphasized, and that a wage increase is a stimulus to the efficiency of workers and to general productivity, only in groups close to the subsistence level. Groups above this are motivated by the desire for leisure and not for more commodities.<sup>5</sup> In a society in which all standards of living were stationary, and social divisions inflexible, this would be true. But when social and economic standards are changing,

<sup>1</sup> *Principles of Political Economy* (2nd ed.), p. 403. Italics are mine. Cf. Marshall's emphasis on activities as against wants which is emphasized in Talcott Parson's articles on Marshall in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics* for November 1931 and February 1932.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 403. Malthus himself usually restricted the application of this idea to workers above the common laboring class. There are passages, however, in which Malthus extends the influence of changing consumption to include laborers (pp. 348, 359). But for the most part, Malthus quite evidently expected the main stimulus to industry to come from the increasing demand of the middle and upper classes.

<sup>3</sup> See Jacob Marschak, *Die Lohndiskussion*, Tübingen, 1930, which summarizes the course of arguments for and against high wages in Germany.

<sup>4</sup> P. H. Douglas, *Theory of Wages*, Macmillan, 1934, pp. 71-74.

<sup>5</sup> This is exactly the reverse of Malthus, who emphasizes the motive of expanding consumption, including leisure, as being especially effective among the higher income groups.

and economic organization is developing so that new commodities are constantly being brought within the sphere of the ordinary consumer, all groups feel the impetus to expand their standards of living.

The introduction of the factory system on a large scale cannot occur without a market sufficiently developed to consume the products which the factory produces.<sup>1</sup> Concomitant with the "Industrial Revolution" must exist not only an export market, but a developed home market, or mass production will be not profitable. Mass production makes possible the sale of commodities once luxuries for the rich alone, at a price within the compass of the laboring man's income.<sup>2</sup> And, in turn, it is the increase of the incomes of the lower classes which makes profitable the manufacture of those goods. It is a circular process and at any one time, either may be cause or effect.

The development of commerce has received attention in discussions of the origin of the "Industrial Revolution", but not the development of demand as a whole. The point has been developed at some length in another place;<sup>3</sup> here it will be summarized. The home market largely consists of the working classes and unless they are willing and able to consume the products of the factory, it cannot subsist. A working population with a high, or more important, a rising standard of living is necessary for industrial expansion. It is at least one highly important factor in the process. Not only does the rising standard make possible the sale of the products of mass production, but the desire for these commodities induces labor to work in the mechanized tasks to which the factory system has reduced most labor.

It is of some interest that the factory system has not been

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the remarks of Malthus on the necessity of developing the demand for manufactures among the middle classes in order to make manufacture profitable. *Op. cit.*, pp. 374-75.

<sup>2</sup> This is hardly the place to discuss whether an increase in wages really adds to general purchasing power. Suffice it to say that an increase in *real* wages does, and it is real wages with which this chapter is concerned. A more extended discussion of the theory of the subject may be found in Marschak and Douglas, and many other treatises on wages, too numerous to mention here.

<sup>3</sup> See the author's "Demand as a Factor in the Industrial Revolution" in *Facts and Factors in Economic History*, published in honor of Professor Gay in 1932.



successfully introduced except where these conditions hold. In England of the eighteenth century, in Switzerland, and in Belgium, a working population incited by changing wages and standards of life existed.<sup>1</sup> India is an example, until recently, of the failure to introduce the factory system, largely because high wages meant nothing to the laborers. The income from a few days' work provided them with their needs, and they saw no reason for working any longer. Not until their wants increased and their standard of life changed, were they willing to submit to the regularity of factory work for the sake of the larger income which it brought.

We conclude, therefore, that the rôle of wages in a changing society may be independent and decisive, both as an incentive to industrial efficiency on the part of the laborer himself, and as a stimulus to industry in general, when wages are considered as a part of consumers' demand. Any process of industrial expansion on a large scale, such as the so-called "Industrial Revolution" must be accompanied by a change in the real wages of the working classes which will enable this two-fold rôle to be played.

### III

The comments of eighteenth century pamphleteers, such as those recorded in the first section of this chapter, make it clear that the standard of living of English society, and especially of the lower classes, was changing. Whether mercantilist or not, the writer was forced to admit the facts. These writings testify to the growth of luxury, the movement between classes. In fact, they describe all the phenomena essential to changes in demand or consumption. Was this change common to the whole country? Our evidence tends to show that it was not, and it must be remembered that most of the writers were Londoners, writing either consciously or sub-consciously about London or other growing towns. The conditions they describe are therefore most applicable to London and the new industrial cities, such as Man-

<sup>1</sup> *Idem.* See section II.



chester and Birmingham, which are frequently referred to by name as following in the footsteps of London in the matter of luxury.

On the basis of the data on wages presented in this volume, the west should certainly be exempted from the charge of increasing luxury. Money wages were extremely low, and rose scarcely at all with the rise in the price of grain which began after 1755. Real wages were equally low, and there is no evidence of a change in standard of living, except possibly in a downward direction, from 1700 to 1790. The working classes there were not full of ambition, economically or socially. They appear to have been a poor, stolid, and often drunken lot, occasionally rebelling in riots and angry demonstrations when conditions became worse than usual, as they did in years of poor harvest. In London, and particularly in the north, on the other hand, the conditions of economic and social flux were apparent. The London laborer had the highest wages of any group we have examined. In the first part of the century, at least, he had surplus income to spend, and there is every indication that real wages improved as the century progressed. The mercantilist attacks on the luxury of the lower classes in London were justified, in the sense that an expansion of consumption standards was actually taking place. Money wages themselves changed more frequently and rapidly in the north than in the other two regions, and real wages very probably were even greater. It is in the north, in fact, in the very region where the "Industrial Revolution" was most striking, that there is the most evidence of a flexible society, a change and increase in demand among the working people, and of an ambitious and active working class. Although the occurrence of extremely bad conditions, which, in some places, resulted from the advent of the factory system, must not be overlooked, the predominant impression is one of increasing well-being among the working classes. It is also in the north that the most important export industries of the eighteenth century are to be found. The mercantilists who feared that higher wages and better conditions of life for the working classes would make England unable to cope with foreign competition, were thus proved wrong. High wages in the north

were no barrier to the expansion of export industries which depended for their profits upon the markets of the world.

It seems logical to argue that the diverse condition of labor which has been found to exist in the north, west, and in and about London may be explained by, and in turn help to explain the industrial and commercial state of these regions. It is not merely coincidence that Yorkshire and Lancashire, which were the centre of industrial expansion in eighteenth century England, were characterized by a laboring class with steadily increasing real wages and economic and social ambition; nor that the western counties, from which the once-important woollen trade was fast disappearing to the north, should possess a poor and unambitious working class. It would be misleading to name one condition the cause or the effect of the other. The important fact is that the two conditions were undoubtedly related. And not only were they related in particular regions in eighteenth century England, but wherever the factory system really took hold in the early stages of modern capitalism.

The shift of the woollen industry from the west to the north, the beginnings of the cotton industry in the north, for example, were undoubtedly the result of numerous factors. All must receive their weight, but one which has not received attention, namely the dynamic nature of the demand of labor in the north, should be emphasized. There the working class was already in receipt of advancing wages, with a growing taste for articles not heretofore included in their budget. The changing economic structure occurring with the widespread development of factories enabled many of them to assume positions of responsibility in the industrial world. Contemporary descriptions of their rise read like the tales of the poor boy who became capitalist in the United States of the nineteenth century. The transition from the irregular working hours of the putting-out system to the regular hours and mechanical labor under the factory system was not easy. Labor everywhere rebelled. There were riots when machines were introduced, in the north as well as in the west. The difference lies in the fact that labor did not continue to rebel in the north, and

that the expanding industrial centers were constantly drawing new labor from the surrounding country.

The goad of an expanding standard of life is necessary before labor can be induced to undergo disciplined factory labor. Higher and steadier wages, and the additional goods which they will buy, make it possible to endure the type of work which the factory system necessitates. The desire to consume was sufficiently established among the working people of the north to make possible the expansion of modern industrialism, whereas this impetus was lacking in the west. In this there is at least one explanation for the industrial decline of the west as against the expansion of the north. Again, it must be emphasized that this argument is advanced as only one out of many factors assisting the industrial development of eighteenth century England. But in the relation between changes in real wages and industrial expansion may be found one important and neglected aspect of the time and place of the occurrence of the "Industrial Revolution."



## APPENDIX I

### MANUSCRIPT SOURCES

#### *Bath Chamberlain's Accounts*

The account books are at the reference library in Bath and contain few wage rates.

#### *Bristol Archives*

Account . . . to build an Exchange and Market Place, 1739-1741  
Cash Books 1698-1703 (no wages)

The archives are kept at the Bristol Town Hall in charge of Miss Harding.

#### *Christ Church Churchwarden's Accounts, Bristol*

The records have been transcribed by Canon R. T. Cole and are therefore legible and easy to use. A good many wage items for repairs of the church are included, which Canon Cole considers are representative of general Bristol rates.

#### *Eighteenth Century Accounts of Dunster Castle, Dunster, Somersetshire*

Through the kindness of G. F. Luttrell, Esq., and his son, the present incumbent of Dunster Castle, all the available bills for the eighteenth century were placed at my disposal. From them the wages of agricultural and general laborers, as well as some craftsmen, were derived for about twenty years in the middle of the century.

#### *Exeter Municipal Records*

Exeter Receivers' Vouchers, 1700-1790

Town Receivers' Books, Exeter, 1712-1720

The books contain no itemized wages. The vouchers, however, include many bills for work on city buildings, etc. The town records are kept in the New Muniment Room in the Public Library in Exeter, in charge of W. A. Gay, Esq.

#### *Exeter Public Library—Original Documents (bound)*

Southcomb's Diary

Lee Ledger

Diary of William Forde of Branscombe

Morebath Churchwardens Accounts (1607-1766)

Woodbury Churchwardens Accounts (1648-1792)

These documents contain very little on eighteenth century labor.



*Gloucester Cathedral Records*

Docketed Accounts of Salaries, Fabric and General Expenses,  
1780-86 (Drawer 1, Staircase Cupboard)

Bailiff's Accounts, 1742-55 (no wages)

Book of Accounts, 1755-6 (no wages)

Repairs and Fabric Accounts, 1756 (Drawer 3, Staircase Cupboard)

Treasurer's Accounts (no wages)

These records are kept at the Gloucester Cathedral under the care of the Very Reverend Henry Gee, Dean of Gloucester.

*Gloucester Chamberlain's Accounts*

The accounts are kept at the Guildhall, Gloucester, and although they contain a few wage figures, are not very useful.

*Greenwich Hospital Accounts*

Works Accounts, 1700-1800

These account books listed the repairs made at the Hospital and the wages paid for such work. The books are kept at the Public Record Office, London, under the heading, Admiralty, Greenwich Hospital.

*Oldknow Papers*

These are the documents that Unwin and his fellow investigators used for their book *Samuel Oldknow and the Arkwrights*, and which are now in the charge of Manchester University. They contain few wage rates for unskilled labor, although some scattered figures for the end of the century were found.

*Oxford, St. John's College*

Bills for repair of college

Bagley Wood Account Book

These records are kept in the library of the College in care of Gavin Bone, Esq. All masons' and plasterers' bills were examined for the eighteenth century; carpenters' bills were sampled.

*Parish Accounts of Thorpe Salvin, Yorkshire*

These papers include the accounts of the constables, churchwardens, and the overseers of the poor. The documents were lent to me by Dr. Hubert Hall. There are many documents of this sort, some of which have been printed. They contain very little wage data, however, and hardly repay the labor of going through them.

*Sutton; Accounts of Surveyors of the Highway*

The accounts are preserved at Chetham's Hospital, Manchester.

*Account Book of the Thornborough Estate, Leyburn, Yorkshire*

This book contains a detailed record of the expenses and profits of the estate during the period 1749-1775. The wages of servants and laborers on the estate are given, and it has been possible in several instances to estimate their annual income with some accuracy. The book belongs to Miss Cicely Hildyard of Scorton, Yorks, who was kind enough to let me use it.

*Westminster Abbey Muniments*

Stewards Accounts, 1698-1787

These accounts contain bills for the work of repairing the Abbey and its property, both in London and other parts of England. Household accounts are also included.

Christopher Wren Account Book, 1713-1720

This is an account of repairs to the Abbey done under the direction of Wren.

These documents are kept in the Abbey muniment room in Westminster.

*Quarter Sessions Records*

Devonshire—Loose bills, including bills for repair of roads and buildings.

Wage assessments have been removed from the Sessions Rolls and are now kept in a separate file.

Gloucestershire—Sessions Papers, 1724-30; 1735-79; 1781-89; 1795

Minute Books 1700-1800

Kent—Session Papers, 1700-1800

Lancashire—Petition Bundles, 1700-1800

Recognizance Bundles, 1701-1745

Middlesex—Chertsey Bridge Committee Book (1782-1788)

Minutes of the Committee for Building the New House of Correction, vol. I (1784-1795)

Orders of Court, vols. VI-VIII

Sessions Books, 1752-1775

Oxfordshire—Quarter Sessions Bundles, 1700-1780

Somersetshire—Quarter Sessions Rolls, 1700-1729

Disbursement Book of Treasurer of Gaols and Hospitals for Western Division, 1656-1735; 1735-1762

Disbursement Book . . . for Eastern Division, 1735-1787 (absolutely no bills containing wages)

Surrey—Sessions Bundles, 1700-1800

Yorkshire—North Riding Sessions Books, 1755-1800

North Riding Sessions Rolls, 1700-1800

West Riding Sessions Books, 1700-1795

West Riding Sessions Rolls, 1700-1800

Manuscript Index of the Rolls

The Sessions papers or bundles are kept at each county seat and must be used there. They contain the original data for all matters which came under the jurisdiction of the Quarter Sessions Court and which are usually noted in the minute books in brief form. The principal source of the wage figures are the bills for the work on county buildings, bridges, and roads which were preserved among these documents. These bills had to be approved by three Justices of the Peace before they could be paid, hence their presence in the bundles. Informations, letters, data on the cases which came up, often proved illuminating in connection with the social conditions of the time. Individual references have been given in the text. As a source of contemporary economic, social and legal matters these records are invaluable.

#### *Printed Quarter Sessions Records*

Only the eighteenth century ones which I have used are listed in this bibliography.

Bedfordshire—Notes and Extracts from the County Records comprised in the Quarter Sessions Rolls from 1714 to 1832. (Compiled by Hardy and Page, 1907)

Derbyshire—Three Centuries of Derbyshire Annals (edited by Rev. T. C. Cox), vol. II, London, 1890

Devonshire and Buckinghamshire—Quarter Sessions from Queen Elizabeth to Queen Anne (edited by A. H. A. Hamilton), London, 1878

Hertford—Hertford County Records, vol. II, Sessions Rolls, 1699-1850; vol. VII, Sessions Records of the Liberty of Saint Albans' Division (1770-1840) (Calendar by W. T. Hardy)

Middlesex—Middlesex County Records, volumes I-XIII (calendared by W. T. Hardy)

Surrey—Index to Surrey and South London Records (copies by W. E. S. and L. Finney, M.D.), London, 1923

Yorkshire (North Riding)—North Riding Record Society, volumes VII–IX (edited by T. C. Atkinson), London, 1884

*Data on Prices*

Most of the price series used by the writer, with the exception of the Gloucestershire, and some of the northern series, were lent by Sir William Beveridge, who is preparing a history of prices. These series are based on figures obtained from county records, manorial court roles, assize prices, and other such manuscript sources. The research on these data has been largely carried on under the direction of Miss F. J. Nicholas, who was Sir William Beveridge's research assistant.

## APPENDIX II

### NOTES ON STATISTICAL METHOD

THE wage data used in the previous study are for the most part very discontinuous. The lack of continuity is largely a result of the fact that the preservation of the wage bills from which the figures were taken depended upon the chance recognition of their value by county officials from the eighteenth century to the present day. Some were thrown away as waste paper; others allowed to rot beside the steam pipes in the cellar of the county hall. Consequently some sessions bundles contained few of these bills in the first place, and others were in such poor condition that they could not be used. Nevertheless the data are sufficiently continuous to enable us to sketch the trend of the wages in certain districts. In the charts dotted lines have been used to indicate the breaks in the continuity of the data. The stability of wage rates over a considerable period of years was shown by the figures for any one place throughout the century, and consequently the lack of continuity does not seriously invalidate the course of wage rates during the period.

The only series which were continuous in any complete sense were the Westminster Abbey and Greenwich Hospital wages. In the case of the Abbey missing years were interpolated (the figure of the preceding year was used) in deriving the median. The same type of interpolation was used in making up annual averages from the monthly wage rates of Greenwich Hospital. Missing months were assumed to have the same rate as the preceding when inspection showed that this was likely to be true. A simple arithmetic average was used in obtaining the annual figure.

The data are peculiarly subject to errors, which may be grouped under the following heads:

1. Ordinary errors due to sampling.
2. Errors resulting from lack of the continuous quotation of the wage rates of specific places within any one district, so that one place or locality may dominate the final average at different times. This, for example, is what happened to Thorold Rogers' average. He himself admitted that the London wages



- dominated his series at certain periods.<sup>1</sup> The same was true of the median of laborers' wages for the North Riding.<sup>2</sup> The text has explained in each instance the methods which have been used to eliminate this source of error. In general, it may be said that grouping of the original data, according to statistical or geographical criteria, has minimized this type of error.
3. Errors resulting from differences in the quality of the work for which the wages were paid. It was difficult to distinguish between the kinds of work performed and the grades of skilled workmen from the original bills. Such quality differences were somewhat lessened by omitting rates obviously applicable to master craftsmen, boys, and women; and such figures as were extremely at variance with the customary wage in the locality. Originally, I went over the various series at least three times, several weeks apart, and checked the results. They have all been checked again, and the medians recomputed in 1933. But some quality differences undoubtedly remain.

Because the data are so imperfect to begin with, as little numerical manipulation as possible has been used. Experimentation with different kinds of averages indicated that the median was the most appropriate for this material, both because it has no upward bias, and because it requires no arithmetical handling of the data. The median therefore has been used in deriving the averages for each district wherever there were three or more samples in a year. A simple arithmetic average was used whenever there were only two samples in a year. When one sample alone occurred, the figure was utilized, if it did not deviate in too extreme a fashion from the general trend of the series. The variation of the number of samples upon which the medians are based in any one year was very great, ranging from one to over thirty. The median tables will indicate the approximate extent of this variation.

As a result, none of the medians are reliable over a short period of time, except those for Westminster Abbey and Greenwich Hospital. The general level of wages and their approximate trend, as checked by other evidence seem to be fairly accurate indications of what was going on, and sufficient as a basis of comparison of the situation in different regions.

<sup>1</sup> *History of Agriculture and Prices*, volume V, chapter 23.

<sup>2</sup> See above, Chapter V.

The prices were reduced from shillings per quarter (they are the annual arithmetic averages of the harvest year lent by Sir William Beveridge) to shillings and pence per half-peck for wheat; per three-quarters peck for barley; and per one and one-half pecks for oats. The Gloucestershire prices were taken from Thorold Rogers<sup>1</sup> and the *Gentleman's Magazine*. The Yorkshire prices were derived from Beveridge's Assize figures for York, the Manchester prices of oats were taken from the *Manchester Mercury* by Mr. A. P. Wadsworth, and reduced from shillings per load (of 36 pecks) to pence per one and one-half pecks.

### NOTES ON STATISTICAL TABLES

#### Laborers' Wages

Owing to the limitations of space the individual wage series for each place have not been given, except in a few instances. The exceptions are the Southwark, Dartford, Maidstone, Chertsey, Kingston, Gloucester, Cirencester, Aure, Winchcombe, Harfield, Cam, Bristol, Dunster, Exeter, Guiting, Pershore, Islip, Oxford, How, Burn, Malton, Masham, Topcliff, Catherick, Corne, Yore, Wakefield, Ripon, Sutton, and Lancaster series which are not usually medians, with the exception of Oxford and Exeter, where a number of quotations existed for nearly every year listed.

The median series do not always average the same type of material. The Westminster and Greenwich series, for example, are medians of different kinds of labor (bricklayers, masons, etc.) whereas the other series are ordinarily medians of the rates paid for the same kind of work at different places.

The Surrey medians include the rates paid at six places in the county (exclusive of Southwark, Kingston, and Frensham) but no more than four of these were quoted in any one year, and the number of samples was usually only one or two. The Gloucestershire, Lancashire, and Yorkshire medians are based on a much larger number of samples. Ninety-two places in Lancashire are included in the median. In any one year, the samples varied from one to seventeen, and in nearly half of the cases the quotations were three and over. Rates from twenty places go to make up the West Riding series. It is rare, however, that more than one or two samples are quoted in a year. The North Riding median includes seventy-eight places. After 1740

<sup>1</sup> *History of Agriculture and Prices*, volume VI.

he number of samples per year was comparatively large, varying from one to twenty-eight, and the number was usually over five, and in half the cases, over ten. Eighty-four places are included in the Gloucestershire series. The samples in any single year ranged from one to eighteen, and the usual size of the sample was between five and ten quotations.

Of the county medians, the Gloucestershire and North Riding series are based on the largest number of samples per year and are therefore of greater validity than the others. Although the Lancashire series is derived from a smaller number of samples per year, it may be regarded with some assurance, as the regional variation within the county seems to have been less than in Yorkshire, and also because it follows the trend of the North Riding medians.

### Craftsmen's Wages

The craftsmen's wage series are medians wherever possible (except in the case of Southwark) and the table headings indicate the crafts which are included. Usually masons and carpenters have been grouped together, as there was almost no difference in their rates. In the case of Westminster, the first series averages bricklayers', carpenters', masons', paviors', plasterers', and plumbers' wages; the second omits the carpenters' and plumbers' rates. The Greenwich series includes the wages of bricklayers, plumbers, masons, carpenters, plasterers, and joiners. The median of craftsmen's wages at Oxford averages the rates of masons, carpenters, plasterers, and slatterers. For Exeter the wages of masons, carpenters, hellyers, paviors, plumbers, and millwrights are included.

The county medians include the same number of places as those of the laborers' wages, but the number of samples in any one year is very much smaller.

TABLE I

## WESTMINSTER ABBEY — MEDIAN OF LABORERS' WAGES

s. d.

Year	Bricklayers' Labor	Masons' Labor	Paviours' Labor	Plasterers' Labor	Median
1700	1-8	1-8	1-8	1-9	1-8
01	1-8	1-8	1-8	1-8	1-8
02	1-8	1-8	1-8		1-8
03	1-10	1-8	2-0	1-10	1-10
04	2-0			2-0	2-0
05	1-10		2-0	1-10	1-10
06	1-10		2-0		1-10
07	1-10		2-0	1-10	1-10
09	1-10	1-8	2-0	2-0	1-11
1710	1-10	1-8	2-0	1-10	1-10
11	1-10	1-8	2-0	1-11	1-10½
12	1-10	1-8	2-0		1-10½
13	1-10	1-8	2-0		1-10½
14	1-10	1-8	2-0	1-10	1-10
15	1-10		2-0		1-10
16	1-10	1-8	2-0		1-10
17	1-10				1-10
18	1-10	1-8	2-0	1-10	1-10
19	1-10	1-8	2-0	1-10	1-10
1720	1-10	1-9		1-10	1-10
21	1-10				1-10
22	1-10	1-8		1-11	1-10½
23					
24					
25					
26	1-10		2-0		1-10½
27	1-10		2-0		1-10½
28	1-10	1-8	1-8		1-9
29	1-10		2-0		1-10½
1730	1-10		2-0	1-10	1-10
31	1-10	2-0	2-0	1-10	1-11
32	1-10	2-0	2-0	1-10	1-11
33	1-10	2-0	2-0	1-10	1-11
34	1-10		2-0	1-10	1-11
35	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0
36	2-0	2-0	2-0	1-10	2-0
37	2-0	2-0	2-0	1-11	2-0
38	2-0		2-0	1-10	2-0
39	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0
1740	2-0	2-0	2-0	1-10	2-0
41	2-0	2-0	2-0	1-10	2-0
42	2-0	2-0	2-0	1-11	2-0
43	1-10	2-0	2-0		1-11½

## WESTMINSTER ABBEY — MEDIAN OF LABORERS' WAGES

s. d.

Year	Bricklayers' Labor	Masons' Labor	Paviours' Labor	Plasterers' Labor	Median
1744	2-0	2-0	2-0		2-0
45	2-0	2-0	2-0		2-0
46	2-0	2-0	2-0		2-0
47	2-0	2-0			2-0
48	2-0	2-0	2-0		2-0
49	2-0	2-0			2-0
1750	2-2	2-0			2-0
51	2-0	2-0		2-0	2-0
52	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0
53	2-0	2-0			2-0
54	2-0	2-0		2-0	2-0
55	2-0	2-0	2-0		2-0
56	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0
57	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0
58	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0
59	2-0	2-0			2-0
1760	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0
61	2-0	2-0		2-0	2-0
62	2-0	2-0			2-0
63	2-0	2-0	2-2	2-0	2-0
64	2-0	2-0	2-2		2-0
65	2-0	2-0	2-2		2-0
66	2-0	2-0	2-2	2-0	2-0
67	2-0	2-0	2-2	2-0	2-0
68	2-0		2-2	2-0	2-0
69	2-0	2-0	2-2	2-0	2-0
1770	2-0	2-0	2-2	2-0	2-0
71	2-0	2-0	2-2		2-0
72					
73	2-0	2-0			2-0
74	2-0	2-0		2-0	2-0
75	2-0	2-0	2-0		2-0
76	2-0	2-0	2-0		2-0
77	2-0	2-0			2-0
79	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-4	2-0
1780	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-4	2-0
81	2-0	2-0			2-0
82	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-4	2-0
83	2-0	2-0		2-4	2-0
84	2-0	2-0		2-4	2-0
85	2-0	2-0			2-0
86	2-0	2-0			2-0
87	2-0	2-0			2-0



TABLE II  
WESTMINSTER ABBEY — MEDIAN OF CRAFTSMEN'S WAGES  
s. d.

Year	Brick- layers	Car- penters	Mas- ons	Pav- iours	Plas- terers	Plumb- ers	Medi- an	Median Ex- cluding Car- penters and Plumbers
1700	2-6	2-6	2-6	2-6	2-6	2-6	2-6	2-6
01	2-6	2-6	2-6	2-6	2-6	2-6	2-6	2-6
02	2-6	2-6	2-6		2-6	2-6	2-6	2-6
03	2-8	2-6	2-6		3-0	2-6	2-6	2-7
04	3-0	2-6			3-0	2-6	2-6	2-9
05	2-8	2-6		3-0	3-0	2-6	2-7	2-10
06	2-8	2-6		3-0		2-6	2-7	2-10
07	2-8			3-0	3-0	2-6	2-7	2-10
09	2-8	2-6	2-6	3-0	3-0	3-0	2-10	2-10
1710	2-8	2-6	2-6	3-0	3-0	3-0	2-10	2-10
11	2-8	2-6	2-6	3-0	3-0	3-0	2-10	2-10
12	2-8	2-6	2-6	3-0	3-0	3-0	2-10	2-10
13	2-8	2-6	2-6	3-0		3-0	2-10	2-10
14	2-8	2-6	2-6	3-0	2-8	3-0	2-8	2-8
15	2-8	2-6	2-6	3-0	2-8	3-0	2-8	2-8
16	2-10	2-6	2-6	3-0		3-0	2-9	2-9
17	3-0	2-6	2-6			3-0	2-10	2-10
18	3-0	2-6	2-6	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
19	3-0	2-6	2-6	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
1720	3-0	2-6	3-0		3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
21	3-0	2-6					3-0	3-0
22	3-0	2-6	2-6		3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
23								
24								
25		2-6						
26	3-0	2-6		3-0			3-0	3-0
27	3-0	2-6	2-6			3-0	3-0	3-0
28	3-0	2-6	2-6	3-0		3-0	3-0	3-0
29	3-0	2-6	2-6	3-0		3-0	3-0	3-0
1730	3-0	2-6		3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
31	3-0	2-6	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
32	3-0	2-6	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
33	3-0	2-6	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
34	3-0	2-6	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
35	3-0	2-6	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
36	2-10	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
37	2-10	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
38	2-10	3-0		3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
39	2-10	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
1740	2-10	3-0	2-9	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	2-11
41	2-10	3-0	2-9	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	2-11

## WESTMINSTER ABBEY — MEDIAN OF CRAFTSMEN'S WAGES

s. d.

Year	Brick- layers	Car- penters	Mas- ons	Pav- iours	Plas- terers	Plumb- ers	Medi- an	Median Ex- cluding Car- penters and Plumbers
1742	2-10	3-0	2-9	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	2-11
43	3-0	3-0	2-9	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
44	3-0	3-0	2-9	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
45	3-0	3-0	2-9	3-0		3-0	3-0	3-0
46	3-0	3-0	2-9	3-0		3-0	3-0	3-0
47	3-0	3-0	3-0	(2-5)		3-0	3-0	3-0
48	3-0	3-0	3-0	(2-6)		3-0	3-0	3-0
49	3-0	3-0	3-0	(2-6)		3-0	3-0	3-0
1750	3-0	3-0	3-0			3-0	3-0	3-0
51	3-0	3-0	3-0		3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
52	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
53	3-0	3-0	3-0			3-0	3-0	3-0
54	3-0	3-0	3-0		3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
55	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0		3-0	3-0	3-0
56	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
57	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
58	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
59	3-0	3-0	3-0			3-0	3-0	3-0
1760	3-0	2-9	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
61	3-0	3-0	3-0		3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
62	3-0	3-0	3-0				3-0	3-0
63	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-4	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
64	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-4	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
65	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-4		3-0	3-0	3-0
66	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-4		3-0	3-0	3-0
67	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-4	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
68	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-4	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
69	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-4	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
1770	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-4	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
71	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-4		3-0	3-0	3-0
72								
73	3-0	3-0	3-0			3-0	3-0	3-0
74	3-0	3-0	3-0		3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0
75	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0		3-0	3-0	3-0
76	3-0	3-0	3-0	3-0		3-0	3-0	3-0
77	3-0	3-4	3-0			3-0	3-0	3-0
79	3-0	3-4	3-0	3-6	3-6	3-0	3-2	3-3
1780	3-0	3-4	3-0	3-6	3-5	3-0	3-2	3-2½
81	3-0	3-4	3-0			3-0	3-2	3-2½
82	3-0	3-4	3-0	3-6	3-6	3-0	3-2	3-3
83	3-0	3-4	3-0		3-6	3-0	3-2	3-3
84	3-0	3-4	3-0		3-4	3-0	3-2	3-2
85	3-0	3-4	3-0			3-0	3-2	3-2
86	3-0	3-4	3-0			3-0	3-2	3-2
87	3-0	3-4	3-0			3-0	3-2	3-2

TABLE III  
GREENWICH HOSPITAL  
MEDIAN OF LABORERS' AND CRAFTSMEN'S WAGES  
s. d.

Year	Labor	Crafts	Year	Labor	Crafts
1700	1-8	2-6	1750	1-8	2-6
01	1-8	2-6	51	1-8	2-6
02	1-8	2-6	52	1-8	2-6
03	1-8	2-6	53	1-8	2-6
04	1-8	2-6	54	1-8	2-6
05	1-8	2-6	55	1-8	2-6
06	1-8	2-6	56	1-8	2-6
07	1-8	2-6	57	1-8	2-6
08	1-8	2-6	58	1-8	2-6
09	1-8	2-6	59	1-8	2-6
1710	1-8	2-6	1760	1-8	2-6
11	1-8	2-6	61	1-8	2-6
12	1-8	2-6	62	1-8	2-6
13	1-8	2-6	63	1-8	2-7
14	1-8	2-6	64	1-8	2-7
15	1-8	2-6	65	1-8	2-7
16	1-8	2-6	66	1-8	2-7
17	1-8	2-6	67	1-7	2-6½
18	1-8	2-7	68	1-7	2-6½
19	1-8	2-7	69	1-7	2-6½
1720	1-8	2-7	1770	1-9	2-7
21	1-8	2-7	71	1-9	2-7
22	1-8	2-7	72	1-9	2-7
23	1-8	2-9	73	2-0	2-8½
24	1-8	2-9½	74	2-0	2-8½
25	1-8	2-9	75	2-0	2-8½
26	1-8	2-9	76	2-0	2-8½
27	1-8	2-9	77	2-0	2-8½
28	1-8	2-9	78	2-0	2-8½
29	1-8	2-9	79	2-0	2-8½
1730	1-8	2-7	1780	2-0	2-9
31	1-8	2-7	81	2-0	2-9
32	1-8	2-6	82	2-0	2-9
33	1-8	2-6	83	2-0	2-9
34	1-8	2-6	84	2-0	2-9
35	1-8	2-6	85	2-0	2-9
36	1-8	2-6	86	2-0	2-9
37	1-8	2-6½	87	2-0	2-9
38	1-8	2-7	88	2-0	2-10
39	1-8	2-6	89	2-0	2-10
1740	1-8	2-6	1790	2-0	2-10
41	1-8	2-6	91	2-0	2-10
42	1-8	2-6	92	2-0	2-10
43	1-8	2-6	93	2-0	2-10
44	1-8	2-6	94	2-0	2-10
45	1-8	2-6	95	2-0	2-10
46	1-8	2-6	96	2-0	2-10½
47	1-8	2-6	97	2-0	2-11
48	1-8	2-6	98	2-0	2-11
49	1-8	2-6	99	2-0	2-11
			1800	2-0	2-11

TABLE IV  
LABORERS' WAGES  
s. d.

Year	Southwark	Dartford	Chertsey and Kingston	Surrey (about Guildford)	Maidstone	Frensham
1700						
01						
02						
03						
04						
05						
06						
07						
08	1-10					
09						
1710						
11					1-4	
12						
13						
14						
15						
16						
17	1-10					
18						
19				1-2½		1-0
1720						
21						
22		1-8				
23				1-6		
24				1-3½		
25				1-4	1-4	
26					1-4	
27	2-0				1-4	
28					1-4	
29				1-3		
1730					1-4	
31	2-0				1-4	
32				1-4	1-4	
33	2-0				1-4	
34	2-0	1-6		1-4	1-4	
35	2-0				1-4	
36	2-0				1-4	
37					1-4	
38	2-0				1-4	
39		2-0		1-3	1-4	
1740					1-4	
41					1-4	
42	1-10				1-4	

## LABORERS' WAGES

s. d.

Year	Southwark	Dartford	Chertsey and Kingston	Surrey (about Guildford)	Maidstone	Frensham
1743					1-4	
44					1-4	
45					1-4	
46					1-4	
47	2-0					
48		1-6				
49					1-4	
1750			1-4		1-4	
51						
52						
53	2-0					
54	2-0				1-4	
55	2-0				1-4	
56	2-0				1-4	
57					1-4	
58			2-0		1-4	
59					1-4	
1760				1-6	1-4	
61					1-4	
62					1-4	
63					1-4	
64					1-4	
65	2-0				1-4	
66			2-0		1-4	
67			2-0	1-4	1-4	
68				1-4	1-4	
69	2-0			1-4	1-4	
1770	2-0				1-4	
71	2-0				1-4	
72						
73	2-0				1-4	
74				1-6	1-5½	
75	2-2				1-5½	
76				1-6	1-7	
77		1-8			1-7	
78		1-8		2-0	1-7	1-2
79	2-0				1-7	
1780	2-0				1-7½	
81		1-10	1-10		1-7	
82			2-0	1-6	1-7	
83			1-10	1-8	1-7	
84			1-10		1-7	
85			2-0	1-4	1-7	



## LABORERS' WAGES

s. d.

Year	Southwark	Dartford	Chertsey and Kingston	Surrey (about Guildford)	Maidstone	Frensham
1786					1-7	
87	2-0	2-0		1-4	1-7	
88		2-0			1-7	
89	2-0				1-7	
1790	2-2	2-2	2-0	1-5	1-7	
91				1-3	1-7	
92	2-2			1-5	1-8½	
93	2-2	2-0			1-10	1-6
94	2-2	2-0			1-10	
95		2-7		1-6	1-10	
96		2-7			1-10	
97		2-7	2-4		1-10	
98			2-4		1-10	
99					1-11	
1800						

TABLE V  
CRAFTSMEN'S WAGES  
(Bricklayers and Carpenters Combined)

Year	Southwark		Dartford	Chertsey and Kingston	Surrey (about Guildford)	Maidstone	Frensham
	B.	C.					
1700	s.d.	s.d.	s.d.	s.d.	s.d.	s.d.	s.d.
01							
02							
03							
04							
05							
06							
07							
08	2-8	2-8					
09							
1710							
11							
12							
13							3-0
14							
15							
16		2-6					
17	3-0	2-6					
18							
19		2-6			1-10		2-6
1720							
21							
22			2-6	2-0			
23		2-6					
24		2-6					
25		2-6					
26		2-6					
27	3-0	3-0				2-0	
28	3-0					2-0	
29					1-8		
1730						2-0	
31						2-0	
32			2-0		2-0	2-0	2-6
33	3-0					2-0	
34	3-0		2-0		1-10	2-0	
35	3-0	2-8				2-0	
36	3-0	2-6				2-0	
37		2-6				2-0	
38	3-0		2-0			2-0	
39			2-6			2-0	
1740			2-0			2-0	

## CRAFTSMEN'S WAGES

(Bricklayers and Carpenters Combined)

Year	Southwark		Dartford	Chertsey and Kingston	Surrey (about Guildford)	Maidstone	Frensham
	B.	C.					
1741	s.d.	s.d.	s.d.	s.d.	s.d.	s.d.	s.d.
42	2-10					2-0	
43						2-0	
44						2-0	
45						2-0	
46						2-0	
47	3-0						
48			2-6				
49						2-0	
1750						2-0	
51							
52		2-8					
53	3-0					2-0	
54		2-8				2-0	
55	3-0					2-0	
56	3-0	2-6				2-0	
57						2-0	
58				2-10		2-0	
59						2-0	
1760					2-2	2-0	
61						2-0	
62						2-0	
63						2-0	
64						2-0	
65	3-0					2-0	
66				3-0		2-0	
67				3-0	2-0	2-0	
68					2-0	2-0	
69	3-0					2-0	
1770	3-0	3-0				2-0	
71	3-0	3-0				2-0	
72		3-0				2-0	
73		3-0				2-0	
74		3-0			2-2	2-4	
75		3-0				2-4	
76			2-6		2-3	2-5	
77			2-6		2-5	2-5	
78			2-6		3-0	2-5	1-11
79	3-0					2-5	
1780	3-0	3-0	2-6			2-5	
81			2-6	2-10		2-5	

## CRAFTSMEN'S WAGES

(Bricklayers and Carpenters Combined)

Year	Southwark		Dartford	Chertsey and Kingston	Surrey (about Guildford)	Maidstone	Frensham
	B.	C.					
	s.d.	s.d.	s.d.	s.d.	s.d.	s.d.	s.d.
1782		3-0		2-10		2-5	
83				2-10	2-5	2-5	
84				2-10	2-4	2-5	
85		3-0		3-0		2-5	
86					2-6	2-5	
87	3-0		2-8		2-0	2-5	
88			2-8			2-5	
89	3-0	3-0			2-0	2-5	
1790	3-4	3-4	2-10	3-0	2-1	2-5	
91		3-4	2-11		2-0	2-5	
92	3-4		2-9		2-2	2-8	
93	3-4	3-6	3-0		2-6	2-11	2-0
94	3-4		3-0	3-6		2-11	
95			3-1½	3-6		2-11	
96			3-1½	3-6		3-0	
97			3-1½	3-6	2-6	3-0	
98			3-6			3-0	
99						3-0	

[illegible]

s. d.



## LABORERS' WAGES

s. d.

Year	Oxfordshire		Gloucestershire							Somersetshire		Devonshire		Guiting	Persshore	Islip
	Ox-ford	Outside Oxford	Glou-ces-ter	Ciren-ces-ter	Aure	Winch-combe	Har-field	Cam	County Median	Bristol	Dunster	Exeter	Outside Exeter			
1725	1-2											1-2				
26		1-4										1-4				
27	1-2	1-2														
28	1-2															
29	1-2															
1730	1-2															
31																
32																
33																
34																
35																
36	1-2								1-0							1-0
37	1-2							1-1	1-1							1-0
38																
39																
1740	1-2		0-10						0-10					0-10		
41	1-1															
42	1-2								1-0							
43																
44																
45	1-1								1-0							
46	1-2								1-0							
47	1-2								1-0							
48	1-1								1-0							
49	1-2								1-0					0-10		1-0

Year	Oxfordshire		Gloucestershire							Somersetshire		Devonshire		Gutting	Pershore	Islip
	Ox-ford	Outside Oxford	Glouc-ester	Ciren-ester	Aure	Winch-combe	Har-field	Cam	County Median	Bristol	Dunster	Exeter	Outside Exeter			
1750	1-2			1-0					1-0	1-0		1-4		0-10	0-10	
51	1-2								0-11	1-2	0-10	1-4			0-10	
52	1-1									1-2	1-0					0-11
53	1-2							1-2	1-0	1-2	1-0					0-11
54	1-2								1-1	1-2	1-0	1-2	1-1½	0-10		1-0
55	1-2				1-2				1-0		1-0					1-0
56	1-2				1-2	0-10			1-0							1-0
57	1-2					0-10			1-1		1-0	1-2				1-0
58	1-2								1-0			1-4				1-0
59	1-2											1-3				
1760	1-2		1-2													
61	1-2		1-2													
62	1-2		1-2													
63	1-2		1-2							1-4	0-10					
64	1-2		1-2		1-1				1-1		1-0	1-4		1-0	1-0	1-0
65	1-2		1-2	1-2½					1-2		1-0	1-1				
66	1-2		1-2	1-2½				1-2	1-2½		1-0					
67	1-2			1-1½					1-0	1-4						
68	1-2							1-1	1-2			1-3				1-0
69	1-2	1-2							1-0			1-4				
1770									1-0							
71									1-0							
72	1-2½								1-0						1-2	
73	1-3							1-0	1-1							
74	1-3						1-3		1-2			1-4				



TABLE VII  
CRAFTSMEN'S WAGES

s. d.

Year	Oxford				Out- side Ox- ford	Gloucestershire					
	Ma- sons	Car- pen- ters	Plaster- ers and Slatter- ers	Med- ian		(Masons)		Low Rate	High Rate	Med- ian (all crafts)	Mas- ter crafts- men
						Glou- cester	Ciren- cester				
700	1-8	1-8		1-8							
01					1-8						
02	1-8			1-8	1-8						
03	1-8			1-8							
04											
05	1-8	1-8	1-8	1-8	1-8						
06	1-8			1-8							
07	1-8			1-8							
08											
09					1-7						
710	1-8			1-8	1-6						
11					1-6						
12	1-8			1-8							
13	1-8			1-8							
14	1-8			1-8	1-7						
15											
16											
17											
18											
19	1-8			1-8							
720	1-10			1-10							
21	1-8			1-8	1-6						
22	1-10			1-10							
23											
24											
25	1-8	1-8	1-8	1-8							
26					1-8						
27	2-0			2-0							
28											
29	1-8			1-8							
730											
31											
32					1-8						
33											
34					1-8						
35											
36	2-0			2-0					1-5	1-5	
37	2-0			2-0				1-4		1-4	
38											
39											
740	2-0	1-10	2-0	1-10½						1-6	1-6
41	2-0	1-10½		1-10½					1-6	1-7	1-6
42	2-0			2-0					1-6		
43											
44											
45	2-0	1-11½	1-6	1-11½				1-4		1-4	
46	2-0	1-11	1-6					1-4		1-4	
47	2-0	2-0		2-0				1-5		1-5	
48	2-0	2-0		2-0							
49	2-0	1-9	2-0	1-11					1-6½	1-6½	
750	2-0	2-0	2-0	2-0					1-6	1-6	
51	2-0		1-6	2-0							
52	2-0	1-7	1-6	1-10							
53	2-0	1-6	1-9	1-8					1-6	1-6	





## CRAFTSMEN'S WAGES

s. d.

Year	Somersetshire			Pershore	Islip	
	Bristol		Dunster			
	Craftsmen	Master Craftsmen				
1700	1-8			1-4	1-6	
01					1-4	
02						
03					1-4	1-6
04						
05						
06						
07						
08						
09						
1710						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						
19						
1720						
21						
22						
23						
24						
25		2-0				
26						
27						
28						
29						
1730						
31						
32						
33						
34					1-6	
35					1-6	
36				1-2		
37						
38	1-10	2-0				
39		2-0				

## CRAFTSMEN'S WAGES

s. d.

Year	Somersetshire			Pershore	Islip
	Bristol		Dunster		
	Craftsmen	Master Craftsmen			
1740	1-10	2-0			
41	1-10	2-0			
42	1-10				
43					
44					
45					
46					
47	1-10				
48			1-4		
49			1-4		
1750					
51		2-6		1-2	
52	1-11	2-6	1-4		
53	1-11	2-11	1-4		1-4
54	2-0		1-4		1-4
55	1-10				
56	1-11				1-6
57		2-0	1-4		1-6
58		2-6			
59					
1760					
61					
62	2-0				
63	2-0				
64					1-6
65			1-6	1-6	1-6
66		2-4	1-6	1-4	
67	2-0				
68		2-2			1-6
69					
1770					
71					
72				1-6	
73					
74					
75					
76					
77					
78					
79					

## CRAFTSMEN'S WAGES

s. d.

Year	Somersetshire			Pershore	Islip
	Bristol		Dunster		
	Craftsmen	Master Craftsmen			
1780			1-8		
81					
82					
83					
84					
85					
86	2-1	2-6			
87	2-4				
88					
89	2-4	2-6			
1790					



## CRAFTSMEN'S WAGES

Year	Exeter								Outside Exeter	
	Ma- sons	Car- pen- ters	Pav- iors	Hell- yers	Plas- ter- ers	Plum- bers	Med- ian	Master Crafts- men	Med- ian	Mas- ter Crafts- men
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
1740					1-8		1-8	2-6		
41	1-10	2-0			1-8	2-0	1-10	2-0		
42	1-9	2-0	2-0		1-8	2-0	2-0	2-0		
43										
44										
45	2-0	2-1					2-0	2-4		
46										
47										
48										
49										
1750	1-8	2-0	1-10	1-8	1-7	2-0	1-8	2-0		
51		2-0	2-0	1-8	1-7	2-0	1-10	2-0		
52										
53										
54								2-0		
55	2-1	2-0		1-8		2-0	2-0	2-6		
56										
57										
58	1-8						1-8	2-0		
59	1-10	2-0	2-0			1-10	2-0	2-7		
1760	2-0	2-0	2-0			1-10	2-0	2-6		
61			2-0			2-0	2-0	2-6		
62										
63										
64										
65	2-0	2-0		1-8			2-0	2-6		
66	1-8						1-8	2-0		
67										
68	1-10	2-0			1-8		1-10			
69	2-0	2-0	1-8	1-8	1-8	2-0	2-0	2-0		
1770	1-11	2-0	2-2	1-8			2-0	2-2		
71	2-0	2-0	2-3				2-0	2-8		
72										
73										
74	2-2	2-0					2-1			
75	2-0	2-1					2-0	2-4		
76										
77		2-2					2-2			
78		2-0	1-10	1-8			1-8	2-2		







## LABORERS' WAGES

s. d.

Year	North Riding of Yorkshire									
	How	Burn	Mol-ton	Mash-am	Top-cliff	Cath-erick	Cover	Yore	Median (Brid-ges and Roads)	Median (Build-ings)
1740										
41										0-10
42										
43										
44										
45										
46									0-8	
47										
48			1-0	0-10					0-10	
49										
1750	1-0	0-9		0-9					0-9	
51										
52										
53		0-9½		0-9½			1-0		1-0	
54									1-0	
55								0-10	1-0	1-2
56	1-2	1-0							1-1	
57									1-2	
58		0-10				1-0	1-0		1-0	
59	1-2								1-2	
1760						1-0	1-1		1-0	1-0
61		0-11							1-0	
62		1-0	1-0			0-10			1-0	
63		1-0				1-0	1-0		1-0	
64		1-0		1-0		1-0			1-0	
65	1-4	1-1	1-2			1-0	1-0		1-2	
66	1-4	1-1			1-1½	1-0	1-0		1-2	
67		0-10							1-1	
68		1-1							1-2	
69		1-0		1-0					1-2	1-2
1770	1-6	1-0		1-0					1-2	
71		1-1		1-0	1-4	1-1	1-2		1-2	
72						1-0		1-4	1-4	
73		1-6					1-6		1-4	1-0
74		1-6			1-6		1-6		1-6	
75	1-6			1-6	1-6				1-6	
76									1-5	
77										
78										1-2
79				1-8½	1-6				1-7	1-2

## LABORERS' WAGES

s. d.

[illegible]

TABLE X  
LABORERS' WAGES  
s. d.

Year	West Riding of Yorkshire						Lancashire	
	Wake- field	Ripon	Sutton	Median (Indus- trial Area)	Median (Rest of County)	County Median	Lancas- ter	County Median
1700								0-9
01								0-8½
02				1-0		1-0		0-8
03								0-8
04		0-8		1-0	0-8	0-10		
05								0-9½
06				0-8		0-8		0-9½
07					0-10	0-10		0-9½
08					1-0	1-0		
09					0-9	0-9		0-8
1710								0-9½
11					0-10	0-10		
12								
13								0-9
14								0-10
15								0-10
16								
17				0-10		0-10		0-8
18				1-0		1-0		0-10
19								0-10
1720								1-0
21					0-8	0-8		0-11
22								
23								
24								
25								0-10
26								
27								1-0
28					0-10	0-10		0-10
29	1-0			1-0		1-0		1-0
1730	1-0			1-0		1-0		1-0
31					0-8	0-8		0-11
32	1-0			1-0		1-0		1-0
33	1-0			1-0		1-0		1-0
34	1-0			1-0		1-0		
35								
36								1-0
37					0-11	0-11		1-0
38								
39								1-0



## LABORERS' WAGES

s. d.

Year	West Riding of Yorkshire						Lancashire	
	Wake-field	Ripon	Sutton	Median (Indus- trial Area)	Median (Rest of County)	County Median	Lancas- ter	County Median
1740								1-0
41								1-0
42		1-0			1-0	1-0		1-0
43								
44								1-0
45					1-0	1-0		1-0
46								0-11½
47					1-0	1-0		
48								1-0
49								1-0
1750								1-0
51								
52								1-0
53								
54								
55								
56				1-0		1-0		
57								0-10
58								
59				1-0		1-0		1-0
1760							1-0	0-11
61								
62								
63					1-0	1-0		1-4
64			0-11				1-2	1-2
65			1-1					
66								
67			1-2					
68			1-0					1-6
69			1-1				1-6	1-6
1770			1-1					1-6
71			1-1				1-6	1-4
72			1-3				1-6	1-6
73			1-2				1-6	1-6
74			1-2					1-6
75			1-1					
76			1-2		1-6	1-6		
77			1-1					
78			1-2					1-6
79			1-3		1-6	1-6		

## LABORERS' WAGES

s. d.

Year	West Riding of Yorkshire						Lancashire	
	Wake-field	Ripon	Sutton	Median (Indus- trial Area)	Median (Rest of County)	County Median	Lancas- ter	County Median
1780			1-2				1-6	1-6
81			1-1			1-0	1-6	1-6
82		1-0	1-1		1-0	1-0	1-6	1-7
83		1-0	1-1		1-0		1-6	1-6
84			1-1				1-5	1-5
85			1-3				1-6½	1-6½
86		1-2	1-3		1-2	1-2	1-8	1-8
87			1-4				1-8	1-7
88		1-2	1-4		1-2	1-2	1-8½	1-8½
89			1-4				1-9	1-8½
1790							1-8½	1-9
91							1-8½	1-8
92								1-6
93			1-6				1-9	2-0
94			1-5				1-9	1-9
95			1-6					
96			1-6					
97			1-6					
98			1-8					
99			1-7					
1800			2-0					

# CRAFTSMEN'S WAGES

s. d.

[illegible]



s. d.

Year	North Riding of Yorkshire							West Riding			Lancashire
	How	Burn	Molton	Catherrick	Top-cliff	Morton	Medians				
							Carpenter	Mason	All crafts		
1740							1-4	1-8	1-4		1-6
41							1-6		1-8		
42											
43											
44											
45											
46											
47							1-7			1-6	1-2½
48			1-6				1-7	1-6		1-6	1-4
49											
1750											
51		1-6						1-6			
52		1-6						1-6			
53											
54											
55	1-6										
56		1-6				1-6	1-6	1-6	1-6		1-6
57	1-8						1-7	1-5			
58		1-6	1-6					1-6	1-6	1-6	1-9
59	1-8	1-6	2-0	1-6		1-7½	2-0	1-6	1-6	1-6	1-3
				1-6		1-6					1-6



## CRAFTSMEN'S WAGES

s. d.

Year	North Riding of Yorkshire							West Riding			Lanca- shire		
	How	Burn	Molton	Cath- rick	Top- cliff	Morton	Medians			Wake- field	Ripon	County Median	Median all crafts
							Carpen- ter	Mason	All crafts				
1760		1-6		1-8	2-0			1-6					1-8
61		1-6						1-6					
62		1-6	1-6					1-9					
63		1-6				1-6		1-9½					
64		1-6		1-6		1-6		1-8				1-6	
65		1-6	1-9	1-6				1-8		1-6			1-8
66								1-6					
67		1-6						1-6				1-7	
68		1-6						1-6					
69		1-6			1-10			1-8					
1770		1-6				1-6		1-8					
71		1-6			2-0			1-6			2-0		
72													
73		1-11						2-3					
74		2-0				2-0		2-0				1-6	
75		2-2		2-0	2-6	2-0							1-9
76	2-6												2-0
77													
78													
79					2-0							1-10	

s. d.

Year	North Riding of Yorkshire							West Riding			Lancashire				
	How	Burn	Molton	Cathe- rick	Top- cliff	Morton	Medians			Wake- field		Ripon	County Median		
							Carpen- ter	Mason	All crafts						
1780	2-6		2-3										2-0		
81													2-0	2-0	2-0
82															
83															
84															
85															
86															
87															
88															
89															
1790	2-2½												2-0		
91													2-0	2-0	2-0
92															
93															
94															
95															
96															

TABLE XII  
ANNUAL AVERAGE PRICE OF WHEAT (PER  $\frac{1}{2}$  PECK)  
s. d.

Year	Gloucester	Exeter	London	Maidstone	Oxford	York
1700		6d.	6d.	6d.	6d.	6d.
01		5d.	5d.	5d.	4d.	5d.
02		5d.	5d.	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	4d.	4d.
03		5d.	7d.	9d.	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	5d.
04			6d.	5d.	5d.	5d.
05		5d.	4d.	4d.	4d.	4d.
06		5d.	4d.		4d.	5d.
07		6d.	5d.	5d.	4d.	6d.
08		10d.	9d.	7d.	9d.	9d.
09		11d.	1-0	1-0	1-1	10d.
1710		7d.	8d.		9d.	7d.
11		6d.	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	8d.	7d.
12		7d.	6d.	7d.	6d.	7d.
13		9d.	9d.	9d.	9d.	8d.
14		6d.	6d.	6d.	5d.	6d.
15		6d.	7d.	7d.	8d.	7d.
16		6d.	7d.	6d.	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	
17		6d.	6d.	6d.	6d.	6d.
18		5d.	4d.	4d.	5d.	6d.
19		7d.	5d.	5d.	5d.	
1720		7d.	6d.	5d.	5d.	6d.
21		6d.	5d.	4d.	5d.	6d.
22		6d.	5d.	6d.	5d.	7d.
23		5d.	6d.	6d.	5d.	6d.
24		6d.	6d.	7d.	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	6d.
25		8d.	8d.	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	8d.	8d.
26		6d.	6d.	6d.	6d.	8d.
27		9d.	8d.	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	8d.	9d.
28	11d.		8d.	8d.	9d.	9d.
29	8d.		6d.	6d.	6d.	6d.
1730	6d.		5d.	5d.	5d.	6d.
31	5d.	4d.	4d.	4d.	4d.	5d.
32	6d.	5d.	4d.	4d.	4d.	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
33		6d.	5d.	5d.	4d.	6d.
34	8d.	7d.	6d.	6d.	6d.	(6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.)
35	9d.	6d.	6d.	6d.	7d.	
36		5d.	6d.	6d.	6d.	6d.
37		5d.	6d.	5d.	6d.	5d.
38		5d.	6d.	6d.	4d.	6d.
39		8d.	8d.	7d.	6d.	8d.
1740		9d.	9d.	8d.	9d.	9d.
41		6d.	5d.	5d.	6d.	6d.
42		5d.	5d.	4d.	5d.	
43		4d.	4d.	4d.	3d.	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
44		4d.	4d.	4d.	4d.	6d.

ANNUAL AVERAGE PRICE OF WHEAT (PER  $\frac{1}{2}$  PECK)

s. d.

Year	Gloucester	Exeter	London	Maidstone	Oxford	York
1745		5d.	6d.	5d.	5d.	7d.
46	6d.	6d.	6d.	6d.	5d.	6d.
47	6d.	6d.	6d.	5d.	5d.	6d.
48	7d.	5d.	6d.	5d.	5d.	6d.
49	7d.	6d.	6d.	5d.	5d.	6d.
1750	7d.	6d.	6d.	5d.	5d.	
51	8d.	7d.	7d.	6d.	6d.	7d.
52	8d.	7d.	7d.	6d.	6d.	
53	8d.	6d.	6d.	6d.	6d.	
54	8d.	5d.	5d.	4d.	5d.	6d.
55	7d.	7d.	6d.	5d.	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	7d.
56	1-1	10d.	10d.	11d.	9d.	10 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
57	1-0	7d.	8d.	8d.	9d.	8d.
58	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	6d.	6d.	6d.	7d.	
59	7d.	6d.	5d.	5d.	6d.	5d.
1760	7d.	6d.	5d.	5d.	5d.	
61	7d.	5d.	5d.	5d.	5d.	6d.
62	7d.	6d.	6d.	6d.	5d.	7d.
63		7d.	7d.	7d.	6d.	
64		7d.	8d.	8d.	8d.	
65		8d.	7d.	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	8d.	
66		9d.	9d.	9d.	9d.	
67	11d.	9d.	10d.	8d.	10d.	
68		8d.	7d.	7d.	9d.	
69		7d.	7d.	7d.	8d.	
1770		8d.	8d.	8d.	9d.	
71		9d.	9d.	9d.	9d.	
72	11d.	9d.	10d.	10d.	10d.	
73	11d.	9d.	9d.	9d.	10d.	
74	1-0	9 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	9d.	10d.	1-0	
75	7d.	8d.	7d.	7d.	8d.	
76	8d.	8d.	8d.	8d.	7d.	
77	9d.	9d.	8d.	8d.	9d.	8d.
78	7d.	7d.	7d.	7d.	7d.	6d.
79	6d.	7d.	6d.	6d.	6d.	6d.
1780	8d.	9d.	9d.	9d.	8d.	8d.
81	9d.	9d.	8d.	8d.	9d.	8d.
82	11d.	10d.	9d.	9 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	10d.	10d.
83	9d.	9d.	9d.	10d.	10d.	9d.
84	8d.	8d.	8d.	8d.	9d.	9d.
85	8d.	9d.	7d.	6d.	8d.	8d.
86	7d.	8d.	7d.	7d.	7d.	8d.
87	8d.	9d.	8d.	8d.	9d.	9d.
88	9d.	9d.	9d.	9d.	8d.	9 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
89	11d.	10d.	10d.	9d.	10d.	9d.

ANNUAL AVERAGE PRICE OF WHEAT (PER  $\frac{1}{2}$  PECK)

s. d.

Year	Gloucester	Exeter	London	Maidstone	Oxford	York
1790	9d.	9d.	9d.	9d.	9d.	9 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
91		8d.				
92		9d.				
93		10d.				
94		11d.				
95		1-3				
96		11d.				
97		11d.				
98		11d.				
99		1-7				



TABLE XIII  
ANNUAL AVERAGE PRICE OF  
s. d.

Year	Barley in Gloucestershire (Per $\frac{3}{4}$ Peck)	Oats (Per $1\frac{1}{2}$ Pecks)	
		Manchester	Lancashire
1728	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.		
29	6d.		
1730	4d.		
31	5d.		
32			
33			
34	5d.		
35	5d.		
36			
37			
38		5 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.	
39		5d.	
1741		6d.	
42		5d.	
43			
44			
45		7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	
46	4d.		
47	4d.		
48	5d.		
49	5d.		
1750	5d.		
51	6d.		
52	6d.	6 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.	
53	6d.	8d.	
54	5d.	9d.	
55	6d.	9d.	
56	8d.	10d.	
57	8d.	12 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	
58	6d.	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	
59	5d.	5 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.	
1760	5d.	6 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.	
61	5d.	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	
62	5d.	8 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	
63		10d.	
64		7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	
65		9 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.	
66			
67	6d.		
68			
69			
1770			
71		12d.	

## ANNUAL AVERAGE PRICE OF

s. d.

Year	Barley in Gloucestershire (Per $\frac{3}{4}$ Peck)	Oats (Per $1\frac{1}{2}$ Pecks)	
		Manchester	Lancashire
1772	8d.	10 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	9 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
73	8d.		10d.
74	8d.		9 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.
75	6d.		8 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.
76	5d.		8 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
77	6d.		9 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.
78	5d.		9d.
79	4d.		7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
1780	4d.		8d.
81	5d.		8 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.
82	8d.		12 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.
83	7d.		12 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.
84	6d.		10d.
85	8d.		10d.
86	6d.		11 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.
87	6d.		10d.
88	6d.		9d.
89	7d.		11d.
1790	7d.		11 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.

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